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THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way" — however dimly, and lost among the host — as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.
—The Voice of the Silence

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"THUS HAVE I HEARD"—
"THE CEDARS OF LEBANON"

The destruction of the body, the sense-powers, the life-breath, the mind, is as the destruction of a leaf, a flower, a fruit; but the Self stands firm like the tree, the Self of true Being, formed of bliss.—*Vivekachudamani*

Those who walk, as pilgrims or peddlers, the plains of Hindusthan, with the sun blazing in the sky, scorching the earth, worship the trees which shelter them. As a religious duty Ashoka not only dug wells for the thirsty wayfarer, but also planted trees on the roads he built, to give the traveller refuge.

But the mountain passes and high plateaux of India reveal a different protective value of trees to the climber who seeks the vision that high altitudes alone bestow. He who slowly mounts the circling path, thousands of feet above sea level, knows how trees protect when the gale blows and the rain beats down or the snow swirls against him. As he ascends and the track becomes bare and barren, longingly he strains his eyes to detect some green foliage at the next turn, like a camel-rider taut and concentrated to catch sight of an oasis in the desert. And the climber's delight turns into surprise when, coming upon a grove of firs, he finds a *Vairagi* who welcomes him to his humble *ashram*.

In this issue is published an interesting article by J. S. Collis on "The Symbol of the Tree in Mythology." Though myths are slowly coming into their own, thanks especially to the work of Carl Jung and some fine publications of the Bollingen Foundation, still the world of modern learning has to find the key to the symbolical language of myths, Indian or Hellenic.

The careful student of the philosophy of the Ancients comes to learn this important lesson:

All the kingdoms of visible Nature are but reflections of their invisible prototypes. Therefore every kingdom, nay, every form in every

kingdom, has not only its outward and ordinary meaning but also an occult one. Each kingdom and each form is a symbol, *i.e.*, an embodied idea. For Plato the lower types were but the concrete images of the higher abstract ones—an Eastern Esoteric teaching. The meaning and mission of any object in Nature can be comprehended only when the higher abstraction which ensouls it, and of which it is a representative and a symbol on earth, is perceived. This apperceptive faculty can be unfolded only by a proper study of the Esoteric Philosophy according to the Law of Correspondences, and full use can be made of it only when the learner is "initiated into perceptive mysteries."

This is true of the Tree as a botanical fact and as a mythological symbol. The poet and the mystic may sing as the intuitive Keats did:—

> . . . the trees
> That whisper round a temple become soon
> Dear as the temple's self.

But only a true philosopher, the genuine lover of Wisdom, is able to read the symbol of the Tree and the Marks or Monograms (*Lakshana*) of many trees. Those dispassionate philosophers of the ancient world from the highest antiquity connected trees with the "gods" and the hidden forces in Nature. Thus in India the Ashvattha and the Bo-tree, in Scandinavia the Yggdrasil, in Egypt the Sycamore, in Syria the Cedar, spoke the metaphysical truth to the purified and sensitive ear of the student of the Occult.

The Tree is the symbol for Sacred and Secret Knowledge, and in antiquity it stood for the Scriptural Record. Again, it symbolized the Initiate, the Master of Light and the Good Law, as the Tree of Life; and "Withering Trees" was the name given to those of the dark way of death.

Every man is a tree of life in which dwells the Thinker, the Ego, the Dragon, the learner from the Master Dragons; but also there is the serpent of the lower mind of passions and desires. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil must shed the sensuous and the sensual, and then it will stand, as the great Shankara says in the verse quoted above, in the glory of Truth, Immortality and Bliss, sending down its roots like the evergreen Banyan. Such is also called "the Incense-Bearing Tree." Every aspirant to the Wisdom of the Most High, to the service of the Compassionate Great, would like to be what George Herbert aspired to be:—

> I read, and sigh, and wish I were a Tree—
> For sure then I should grow
> To fruit or shade; at least some bird would trust
> Her household to me, and I should be just.

SHRAVAKA

THE SYMBOL OF THE TREE IN MYTHOLOGY

[**Mr. John Stewart Collis** needs no introduction to the readers of THE ARYAN PATH. Since 1931 he has lent his support as a contributor to our pages. He is the author of *Forward to Nature*, and his work on the land during the last World War gave him the inspiration for his books, *While Following the Plough* (1946); *Down to Earth* (1947); *The Triumph of the Tree* (1950); *The Moving Waters* (1955) In this interesting essay he has many thoughts which will interest many readers. We draw the reader's attention to the opening pages of this number, in which the same symbol of the tree is dealt with.—ED.]

If we walk through even a small wood at night we find it eerie. If someone tells us that we will encounter alarming appearances or hear ghostly cries, we are quite likely to see or hear them—for, though the scene outside has changed completely, a wood or forest in 1957 A.D. is much the same as in 1957 B.C., or long before. We can understand how from the earliest times trees have exercised a powerful influence upon mankind. At first they were feared. And when a thing is feared it is not seen for what it is: something else is seen, a god or a devil; and in the eyes of early man there were many tree-gods and tree-devils to be placated and worshipped and treated with circumspection.

As time went on they saw more than gods and devils. A multitude of supernatural beings peopled the woods—gnomes, fairies, elves, pixies, fauns, dryads, satyrs, leprechauns. It is strange how the fairies appeal to us still and how easily we accept them in literature. When we read about Ariel we do not find him ridiculous. Nothing could be more fantastic or far-fetched than the idea that Prospero could open a pine tree and let Ariel get out. Yet we accept it readily, just as we accept the notion that Sycorax by the help of her most potent ministers and in her unmitigable rage did confine him there, within which rift he remained a dozen years venting his groans; and we are quite prepared to hear Prospero threaten to rend an oak and peg him in its knotty entrails till he had howled away twelve winters. And we know how beautifully the nymphs and naiads, the fauns and dryads, enter into Greek and Roman literature in the hymns of Homer and the odes of Ovid. They thought that it was not possible that the splinterer of the crag was also the shaper of the hyacinth—there must be many gods. Looking round upon the rich and lovely lands of Greece and Italy, they beheld a multitude of spiritual toilers among which the tree-spirits took a prominent place, while the chief woodland deity of classic times, Pan, has returned to us in

modern days as Pantheism. Even the Gods of Olympus themselves started as trees. Though eventually they held court upon the Mountain in all the panoply of deified beings, they could not have got there without the benefit of the oak, the ivy, the apple and the mistletoe—thus Zeus from the oak, Dionysus from the ivy, Apollo from the apple.

In the same way we see Thor in Northern Europe associated with the rowan tree whose bunched berries in autumn still astonish us like flaming flowers; we see Ukho, their god of thunder, and Taara, and Balder, all taking their origin from the oak; we see the sacred grove of Upsala dedicated to Woden, the god who after hanging for nine nights on the gallows-tree descended to the underworld and brought back the prize of wisdom. In Egypt, we see, Osiris, the god of vegetation, had his origin in a tree, as also Adonis in Syria and Attis in Phrygia. *The Book of the Dead* of the ancient Egyptians gave instructions to all souls on their arduous journey to the Islands of the Blest. The soul on leaving the body set out to climb the hills and cross the desert; and, when at last, weary and faint with hunger and thirst, he reached the divine sycamores, then one of the goddesses —Nuit, Hathor, Selkit or Nit— emerged from a tree and offered him fruit, bread and water. Thus refreshed, he could proceed on his journey, but, being now the guest of the goddesses, he passed safely through all perils and eventually reached the Islands of the Blest where he found happiness and peace for evermore.

It was not only the great forest with all its echoing mysteries and deep shadowy shrouds, nor the single tree of compelling size or fearful aspect, which commanded the veneration and promoted the idolatry of the people. A clump of trees made a great impression. A few standing closely erect upon a hill suggested divinity. Sometimes they were thought of as the abode of gods, and sometimes they were regarded simply as natural temples in which gods might be approached. In both cases they were known as groves. No race was more influenced in this way than the Jews. So deeply did the Semites cling to the belief that there was a spiritual force inherent in vegetation that the Old Testament prophets, engaged in removing the Deity out of reach, were appalled at the perversity with which the Israelites persisted in planting groves and setting up altars in the sacred shades. The Old Testament is riddled with the denunciations of the prophets regarding them: "He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves,"[1] or "And they set them up images and groves in every high hill and under every green tree,"[2] "And

[1] *2 Kings*, 18. 4.
[2] *Ibid.*, 17. 10.

they left all the commandments of the Lord their God...and made a grove"[3] and so on. As a boy at school, aged ten, I remember being expected to pull a solemn face over this, and under the head of "divinity" being made to learn by heart the imprecations of the prophets. This put me more against the prophets than the groves.

A grove could also be a centre from which a deity would give advice or make prophecies—that is, an oracle. A rustling could be heard among the branches! Was it not a god speaking? Soon they learnt to interpret his message through specialists in this kind of thing—priests. Moreover, the roots of the trees were regarded as cords of communication with the lower regions, the abode of departed spirits who were informed with wisdom and knowledge of the future. Thus the very deep roots of the Oak at Dodona, reaching down to Tartarus, justified that the grove should be considered even more qualified in prophetic power than the famous grove at Delphi.

When we today look up into the sky we see the endless ether. In earlier times they saw a roof. Here, beneath their feet, was the earth; there, above, was its roof—blue, scarfed or sparkling with jewels. What was holding up the roof of the world? What pillared it? It would seem that a cloud-capped mountain could easily be conceived as a pillar—and was thus conceived. But still more wide-spread was the idea that a tree, a Universe Tree, was responsible for sustaining the sky. They imagined the existence of colossal trees, the most famous of which was the Scandinavian Yggdrasil Ash.

All Life is figured by Them as a Tree [wrote Carlyle]. Igdrasil, the Ash-tree of Existence, has its roots deep-down in the kingdoms of Hela or Death; its trunk reaches up heaven-high, spreads its boughs over the whole Universe: it is the Tree of Existence. At the foot of it, in the Death-Kingdom, sit three *Nornas*, Fates—the Past, Present, Future; watering its roots from the Sacred Well.[4]

Descriptions of extraordinary trees of this kind lent themselves to the tautological rhetoric of the word-drugged Jews. Thus Ezekiel spoke of a tree whose

height was exalted above all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long because of the multitude of waters when he shot forth. All the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all great nations.[5]

And thus Nebuchadnezzar:—

I saw, and beheld a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof

[3] *Ibid.*, 17. 16.

[4] *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, "The Hero as Divinity."

[5] *Ezekiel*, 31. 5-6.

was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth: The leaves thereof were fair and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it.[6]

In still earlier times when the mind moved even more freely in creative mood there was really no boundary to the properties of the Universe Tree. The grander the conception, the easier to believe. It bestowed knowledge, wisdom, bliss. It could grant men courage and give women children. It was the ladder by which the dead could mount to Heaven. It provided milk, water, dew and rain. Its juice was intoxicating. Its seed was the progenitor from which all forms of life were created. Its trunk was the abode of gods who fed upon the ambrosia which gave eternal life. Its roots reached down into the lowest depths of the nether regions from whence rose the springs that gave water to the rivers of the world. Its boughs composed the scaffolding of the sky; its leaves were clouds, its fruit the stars—the sun and moon but baubles in its branches.

The intricacies of tree-worship make any plain or comprehensive statement rather difficult—I have but held up the mirror to a few aspects. The Indian conceptions would make a study in themselves. The great god, Brahma, who, letting the light of his countenance fall upon chaos, dispelled the primeval gloom and lifted the earth from the ocean, is represented in Hindu mythology as having emanated from a golden lotus which had been quickened into life when the spirit of Om moved on the face of the waters. What we do find in Indian mythology, or in interpretations of it, is a deeper digging into the meaning and significance of symbols than we get elsewhere. Thus, to take a single example, there is the Garden of Eden with its Tree and its Serpent. The tree makes an easy symbol; it is the Tree of Knowledge, partaking of which we were expelled from the paradise of innocent ignorance and took upon ourselves the burden of consciousness. But why the Serpent? It is about this, and many other aspects, that H. P. Blavatsky has pregnant things to suggest in *The Secret Doctrine*:—

As a symbol, the Serpent had as many aspects and occult meanings as the Tree itself; the "Tree of Life," with which it was emblematically and almost indissolubly connected. Whether viewed as a metaphysical or a physical symbol, the Tree and Serpent, jointly, or separately, have never been so degraded by antiquity as they are now, in this our age of the breaking of idols, not for truth's sake, but to glorify the more gross matter.[7]

[6] *Daniel*, 4. 10–12

[7] *The Secret Doctrine*, I. 405

And again:—

The serpent, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the Tree of Life, are all symbols transplanted from the soil of India....

It is only when its pure boughs had touched the terrestrial mud of the garden of Eden, of our Adamic race, that this Tree got soiled by the contact and lost its pristine purity; and that the Serpent of Eternity—the heaven-born LOGOS—was finally degraded. In days of old—of the *divine Dynasties* on Earth—the now dreaded Reptile was regarded as the first beam of light that radiated from the abyss of divine Mystery.

JOHN STEWART COLLIS

CULTURE AND PERSONALITY

Lecturing on "The Cultural Problem in India" at the Indian Institute of World Culture, Basavangudi, Bangalore, on May 11th, Shri K. G. Saiyidain said that culture was not purely social, intellectual, artistic, ethical or religious. Some old men and women in the villages possessed true culture. Decent, kindly, humble, with an infinite capacity for fellow feeling, such an one could develop his own personality and help others to develop theirs.

Culture, he said, was essentially created by individuals, some prominent and many obscure ones whose works survived. The works of the hand deserved the same reverent appreciation as the works of the mind. The tendency today was to accentuate material above cultural development, but means, he said, should be distinguished from ends. Hydroelectric projects were obviously important; they could help produce the social and economic conditions under which the human spirit could flower. The spiritual and cultural enrichment of the group ought to be the aim.

Shri Saiyidain saw a threat today to the essential feeling of unity in a great diversity which characterized India's essentially assimilative culture. Nothing, he declared, was more dangerous for the country than the development of the existing tensions, communal, regional and linguistic. The revivalists who would accept nothing since antiquity as truly Indian, rejecting both the mediæval Islamic and the later Western contributions, and those who valued only modern things, both threatened to harm the gracious pattern of Indian culture. In our united world it was impossible altogether to exclude influences from without.

It needs to be recognized that, "nothing that is good and gracious in the life of man is contrary to the spirit of culture." He aptly recalled Muhammad's having called wisdom "the property of the true believer," which any one who found might claim as his own. What was basic to the spirit of man needed to be understood. Culture was incompatible with narrowness or fanaticism of any kind and true cultural progress was progress in charity.

Major-General S. L. Bhatia, M.D. (Cantab.), F.R.S., I.M.S. (Retd.), who presided, urged the importance to national unity of assimilating the best in all these cultures in a culture based upon compassion.

E.M.H.

THE VEDIC OUTLOOK
AND ITS RELEVANCE TODAY

[**Shri K. Guru Dutt** was the Director of Public Instruction in the Mysore State. In his retirement he is busy studying and teaching. He has reverence for the Great Ancients, and aspiration to serve the cause of Knowledge, as a devotee of the *Devas* above and a lover of his fellow men around him. He is a great friend of the Indian Institute of World Culture at Bangalore and has instructed its audiences on a variety of subjects.

In this thought-provoking and lucidly-worded essay he refers to the Vedas, millennia old. H. P. Blavatsky remarks that "the *Veda* of the earliest Aryans, before it was written, went forth into every nation of the Atlanto-Lemurians, and sowed the first seeds of all the now existing old religions"; and again—"the Vedas are, and will remain for ever, in the esotericism of the Vedanta and the Upanishads, 'the mirror of the eternal Wisdom.'"

Another important idea presented in the article is about *Yajna*. On this too H. P. Blavatsky makes a very important contribution: "It is one of the forms of Akasa, within which the mystic WORD (or its underlying 'Sound') calls it into existence. Pronounced by the priest-Initiate or Yogi, this WORD receives creative powers, and is communicated as an impulse on the terrestrial plane through a trained *Will-power*."—ED.]

In the sacred literature of India, the Vedas have priority in point of time as well as importance. They have been transmitted by oral tradition over a period of millennia. The texts extant today appear to have formed part of an immense collection, the bulk of which has been lost. The Vedas are four in number: *Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda* and *Atharvaveda*. Each Veda comprises two broad divisions—the compilations of *mantras* (Samhitas) and the Brahmanas, prose treatises dealing with the sacrificial application and symbolic significance of the *mantras*. The concluding portions of the Brahmanas are known as Aranyakas or "forest books," and it is in these that the esotericism and philosophy of the Vedas finds its place, particularly in the last chapters called Upanishads. It has been usual for modern scholars to write as if the ritualism of the Vedas and the philosophy of the Upanishads formed a marked antithesis. But tradition has not recognized any such contrast. Viewed from the inside, the Vedas constitute a harmonious whole, and the Upanishads merely make explicit an outlook which was inherent in the ritual. Our task will be to elucidate this outlook.

First and foremost, the Vedic outlook is dominated by an all-pervasive concept of law known as *Rita*, which is at once moral and cosmic, combining in itself the significance of the English words "right" and "rite," with which it has etymological affinity. It is noteworthy that

the idea closely corresponds with the ancient Zoroastrian "*Asha*," which means right and truth, and the Chinese *Tao*, the right way or order of the Universe. In the words of Macdonell, "It would be in the spirit of all three religions to say: *Asha*, or *Rita*, or *Tao* is the basis of religion."

Rita is derived from the root *ri* (=to flow) and at the outset stands for the even flow of natural phenomena. It underlies the specific functioning of things animate and inanimate, human and divine. Through it, the seasons (*ritu*) recur, the waters flow, fire burns and the human brain thinks. It exists before Heaven and Earth. The gods are born of it (*Ritaja*). They are faithful to the path, steadiest in the order (*Ritavan*). Not less so is the earnest worshipper. He too is *Ritavan*. *Rita* is the common ground in which gods and men participate, which holds together the order of nature, the ritual of worship and daily duty in a single principle. As Dr. Radhakrishnan has put it, "Everything that is ordered in the universe has Rita for its principle."

In the Veda, the word of power is Brahman. In a manner of speaking, it is the stuff or substance whose dynamics is *Rita*. Literally it means "growth," "expansion," "evolution," "development," "swelling of the spirit or soul." Primarily it stands for the outpouring of the heart in prayer; secondarily for the sacred utterance itself: the text of the Veda. It is religious or spiritual knowledge and already bears within it the potency of the significance given to it in the Upanishads: the one self-existent impersonal spirit, the Universal Soul—the one divine essence and source from which all created things emanate, with which they are identified and to which they return, the Eternal, the Absolute. For the Vedic worshipper, Brahman was not only the objective but also the means of worship. It was the original experience of which the various gods were only aspects, the matrix out of which the *Devas* were moulded. This unity is a basic assumption of the Vedas, and not a later development as modern scholars are prone to think. An ancient verse of the *Rigveda* exclaims: "Indra, Mitra, Varuna, and the divine bird Garutman, these are none other than the One Existent whom the sages name variously, as Agni, as Yama and as Matarishvan!" It was through the medium of the gods that this multiform Brahman was to be realized.

The Vedic attitude towards the divine cannot be easily related to any of the familiar Western categories like monotheism, polytheism or pantheism. The approach is so strikingly distinctive that Max Müller felt obliged to coin the new term "Henotheism" in order to describe it: the eulogizing of each god as supreme in his own context. But even this covers only the fringe of an outlook which made the co-

existence of diversity with unity its main plank and was based on the insight that justice could be done to the One only by contemplating it under the guise of the Many, and to the Many under the form of the One. Many were the devices adopted for this, apart from "henotheism" proper, *e.g.*, the invoking of gods in pairs, like Indra-Agni, or Mitra-Varuna; in groups either more or less homogeneous like the Maruts or Rudras, or of separate gods; and lastly of all the gods together (*Vishvedevas*). Behind all this lay the experience that a single power was the source of the divinity of the gods: In the words of the *Rigveda—Mahad devanam asuratvam ekam!* Divinity was generic, and was to be reverenced everywhere. A verse says:—

Veneration to the great gods, veneration to the lesser, veneration to the young, veneration to the old; we worship (all) the gods as well as we are able: may I not omit the praise of the elder divinities.

Against this background, the status and characteristics of the individual gods (*Devas*) can be better appraised. The word *Deva* means the shining or glorious one. But it is not the visible luminaries alone, like the sun, who are so described. All the gods partake of a certain light which is not purely literal, and which is variously termed, with unparalleled richness, as brightness (*bhrajas*), effulgence (*dyuti* and *jyoti*), glory or splendour (*bharga*), or again as power and greatness (*mahas*). Other features are, *e.g.*, beauty (*vapus*), loveliness (*sri*) and wonder (*citram*) and so on.

Along with these, certain ethical factors are prominent. The gods are not glorified and capricious humans, but are compact of the cosmic order (*Rita*) as has been already noticed. Twin brother with *Rita* is the concept of truth (*Satya*), also cosmic in its reach. It is by truth that Heaven and Earth are upheld. For the gods, truth is the law of their being and the source of their power: they are *Satyadharma* and *Satyasava*. They are also accessible, friendly and generous. It thus happens that the individuality of the gods is not always clearly defined, and there is continual merging and overlapping of nature and function among them, which is the direct consequence of the oneness of their origin, and the deliberate means for reaching through the Many to their Source.

The complex multiplicity of the gods is as remarkable as their mutual interpenetration. They are not wholly anthropomorphic, although such traits are frequently attributed to them. The background of natural phenomenon or myth never allows itself to be ignored, although transcended from step to step. Thus Agni, who is first among the gods, is at the outset the earthly fire. But he is at the same time lightning or atmospheric fire, and the sun or celestial fire. He is the mediator between gods and men, and is the personification of the

worshipper himself (*Purohita*). He is hymned as the dear friend, the master of the house (*Grihapati*), eternally young (*Yuva*), all-knowing (*Jatavedas*), who confers wealth as well as wisdom.

The natural basis is also obvious in many other cases: the waters (*Apah*), the wind (*Vayu*), the storm winds (*Maruts*), the dawn (*Ushas*), the sun (*Surya*), the earth (*Prithivi*) and so on. Abstract qualities are also deified: thus there is faith (*Shraddha*) and anger (*Manyu*). In other cases the names are no longer so transparent. We have Indra, the king of the gods, who has no equal for heroism and liberality; Varuna, the all-seeing lord of the waters, who protects the laws and punishes sin; Soma, the embodiment of ecstasy and exhilaration; the Ashvins, symbols of all dualities and their balance; and others too numerous to mention, not omitting, however, Savita, the prime inspirer.

Only one more aspect of the Vedic outlook remains to be here considered: ritual communication with the gods, compendiously termed *yajna*. The essence of the process was *bhavana*: realization (literally—making real) through the creative imagination. The *Bhagavad-Gita* goes to the root of the matter when it describes *yajna* as the act of *bhavana* by means of which men and gods mutually cherish each other. The principal element in it was the Sacred Speech (*Daivi Vak*). The sacredness was bestowed by poetic inspiration. The Vedic Sages (*Rishis*) are primarily poets (*kavi*). A verse of the *Rigveda* says: "All gods take their position in the highest place of the songs"; and the poet adds that the songs are no use to him who does not know this. The poetic utterance is *mantra* (from *man* = to think, and *tra* = to protect). Along with the *mantra* generally goes the sacrificial offering through Agni, the mouth of the gods. Fire was to the Vedic worshipper the visible symbol of intensity of devotion, purifying and chastening; of the fire of understanding which digests knowledge; and the vital fire which digests food. It was always associated with speech (*vak*). An alternative form of *yajna* employed, in the appropriate context, libations of *soma*, the divine drink. Through *yajna*, man (*Nara*) recovered his cosmic setting and became *Vaishvanara* (one of the names of Agni) by spiritual identification.

The main strands which go to make up the web of Vedic thought, *viz.*, *Rita*, *Brahman*, the *Devas* and *Yajna* have been traced in outline. Of these *yajna* is the most crucial, for it presumes a universe whose constitution (*Brahman*) makes it accessible to prayer, through the medium of entities (*Devas*) who are not capricious and wilful but function within the orbit of law (*Rita*). This is continually recognized in the Veda. A celebrated hymn of the *Rigveda*, the "*Purusha Sukta*," says that the whole of creation, animate

and inanimate, as well as the Vedas themselves, emanated from Universal *Yajna*. The *Bhagavad-Gita*, which is the gospel of classical Hinduism, proclaims this in unmistakable language: the all-pervading Brahman is ever centred in *yajna* (*Tasmat sarvagatam Brahma nityam yajne pratisthitam*). For the *Gita*, *yajna* is obligatory as well as efficacious, just as the Veda separates the Aryas who offer sacrifice (*Yajvan*) and the Dasas who do not (*Ayajvan*).

It may be said that the relevancy of the Vedic outlook to modern times stands or falls by the acceptability or otherwise of the notion of *yajna*. If the principle is accepted, the form that *yajna* takes is capable of infinite variation, as emphasized in the *Gita*. Or as the Veda puts it: Let the ritual be born afresh (*Navyo jayatam ritam*). But the question is, Does it work? Will it deliver the goods? The answer of the Vedas was a confident affirmative.

The objectives of *yajna* were preeminently realistic: health and longevity, progeny, food and wealth, vigour of the senses and understanding, and collective welfare. We do not find in the Vedas any opposition between matter and spirit, between body and soul, or between this world and another. The Vedic outlook reconciles the antinomies. Thus it is without shamefacedness that the Veda says: This world is the most beloved of all (*Ayam lokah priyatamah*!). The Veda knows nothing of the conflicts within the "sick soul," to use William James's well-known phrase; nor is it morbidly preoccupied with eschatological problems. Through *yajna* it seeks to remedy the imbalance inherent in unregenerate human living, and to integrate the instinctive and the spiritual, the individual and the social, and the contemplative and active faculties of mind; between the religious power (*Brahma*) and the secular power (*Kshattra*), or the "Sacerdotium" and the "Regnum" as Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy put it. In short, it aims at a certain wholeness through expansion (*Brihmana*) of the consciousness, and its enrichment in quality by the cultivation of the positive virtues like heroism (*Virya*) and friendship (*Sakhya*), against a background of austerity (*Tapas*), liberality (*Dana*) and compassion (*Daya*).

Modern man would certainly welcome these objectives, although, in the name of science, he would question the validity of the means proposed. But that is not the whole story. On the one hand, notwithstanding the unprecedented stretching of the frontiers of knowledge in the domains of physics, biology, psychology and parapsychology, revealing an unsuspected range in phenomena as well as in human faculty, he is becoming painfully aware that the purely objective world-view offered by science is inadequate for sane living.

On the other hand, he is subjectively realizing to what an extent our experience of reality is mediated by our assumptions and the symbols we use. Pre-occupation with effective symbolism is distinctive of our century. Psychological investigation has shown how our unconscious mental life is dominated by dynamic symbols. Language itself, humanity's most potent instrument for good or ill, is now seen as an extended and insidious network of symbolism, as evidenced for example in the new science of semantics and the philosophical school of Logical Positivism; although it must be confessed that owing to a sterile, negative approach, their findings are by no means as interesting as their implications. Above all, science itself is being recognized as no more than a particular type of language for questioning nature, and thus not the only one.

Speaking generally, we see that it is through symbols alone that significance is achieved or augmented. In every process of symbolic transformation, the elements of *yajna* are present. We build up our symbols and our symbols dominate us. The world is ruled by its symbols. This principle, which is effective at all levels, furnishes the key to the understanding of human activity in its essence. Scientific research may be likened to a *yajna* which, by a cult of abstract symbols deliberately emptied of all *bhavana*, has conjured up a world-view to match, but which works. Its very success has blinded us to the existence of vital symbols of our general orientation in nature, on the earth, in society, and in what we are doing, which, as Mrs. Susanne K. Langer points out in her thoughtful study of symbolism, *Philosophy in a New Key*, are always our most important assets. She says that this alienation from symbols which constituted our safe moorings in the unconscious, and an attitude towards work in which it ceases to be ritual, are two great threats to mental security in modern civilization. It is in such a context that the relevancy of the Vedic outlook comes in, holding out hopes of a recovery of the healing touch of those universal life-symbols which form the heritage of the Aryan race.

K. GURU DUTT

THE CONVIVIAL ASCETIC

[Our readers are familiar with the sane and balanced insight into a variety of problems expressed in the essays of **Dr. Alexander F. Skutch.** He is a naturalist who has been collecting specimens and also been studying bird habits in Central and South America. His reverence for Nature is great and his views on right intelligent living are helpful.

In this article there are some thought-provoking statements. Man sows, harvests and consumes food, but does not truly recognize that these acts are indissolubly linked with Nature and also other human processes. This is the old teaching of the wisdom of Prajapati quoted in the third chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita.* Again, *yoga* in the dual aspect of Yoke and Union is brought out. We must practise asceticism which frees us from the yoke of the lower selfish nature, but which simultaneously enables us to unite with the higher Self-Nature. Right Loneliness and Good Company both are aspects of convivial asceticism. One-sided asceticism begets the false pietist of bewildered soul; at the other extreme is the hedonist—time-waster at night and sluggard in the morning, corrupter of his own soul. The childish old age is different from Second Childhood. Our author recommends regaining of the Child State so pithily described in Shankara's *Crest-Jewel of Wisdom*: "As a child free from hunger and bodily pain, rejoices in his play, so the sage delights, happy, free from 'my' and 'I.' Things of sense neither wound him nor delight him, he is no longer either allured or revolted by them; in the supreme Self he joys and rejoices over, delighting in the essence of that unrivalled bliss." The great Buddha in a single verse, 142 of the *Dhammapada,* has voiced the philosophical formulæ of this article: "But he who is tranquil and serene and calm and lives a tamed and restrained life of holiness and has ceased to injure living things, though richly attired, he is a Brahmana, an ascetic (Samana) and a monk (Bhikkhu)."—Ed.]

At first sight, the title of this short paper seems to involve mutually contradictory terms. A convivial ascetic appears to be an impossibility, like "black whiteness" or "the son of a barren woman." Everyone knows that a convivial person is given to eating and drinking in jovial fellowship; we commonly think of him as seated or reclining at the festive board. The ascetic, on the contrary, holds himself aloof from such gatherings. Although he may dwell with others who share his austere practices, he is often a hermit, who munches in contemplative solitude his frugal meal. The festive board where wine flows freely is anathema to him. How could an ascetic be convivial?

Such is the common conception, but if we analyze the situation a little more deeply we shall see that it is wrong. At least, the usual distinction between the convivial person and the ascetic fails to do justice to the literal meaning of the word convivial—*con vivere,* to live

with others. Let us in imagination seat ourselves, as uninvited and unseen guests, at the groaning board; and while the invited guests lift the wine cup in repeated toasts, and stuff themselves with an excess of rich foods, and pass the merry quip and shake with laughter, let us reflect earnestly upon what we behold.

In most countries, and throughout the greater part of history, our thought would trace this superabundance of choice comestibles back to the toil of oppressed serfs or driven slaves, living in misery and squalor, deprived of adequate nourishment, bereft of freedom, beauty and hope, so that their masters might enjoy enervating luxury and ease. Yet many of those downtrodden toilers are by natural endowment nowise inferior to their lords; given the same advantages, they would in numerous instances surpass them in wisdom or wit. But, dull and uncouth as the inevitable result of the harsh conditions of their lives, they are naturally excluded from the brilliant company amidst which we sit. The convivial fellowship does not extend to them; it is confined to a narrow clique, callously indifferent to the well-being of the very workers upon whose toil it subsists.

But, it will be objected, the situation we have just contemplated is archaic; in the more advanced countries, where agriculture no less than industry is largely mechanized, everyone enjoys an abundance without the forced labour of slaves or of serfs bound to the land. While there has been much improvement in this respect, it is still true that the world contains many human mouths that might benefit by the food which harms those who eat too lavishly. Yet even with the assurance that the meat and drink that burden the table at which we sit were not produced by undernourished labourers, we are not quite happy about them. Our mental vision follows the flesh on the plates before us back to the reeking slaughterhouse, where inoffensive animals in the prime of life were cruelly butchered, perhaps after a long, harassing journey in an overpacked van, after much abuse and mutilation on the farms where they were reared. Even the ice-cream, so innocent in appearance, calls up visions of calves who never enjoyed a taste of their mothers' milk, who were perhaps slaughtered at a tender age to increase the dairyman's profits.

The cigarettes, the coffee and the cocktails, which figure so prominently at luxurious entertainments of the present day, appear to escape this objection. We cannot by any stretch of the imagination detect a drop of blood on them. Yet tobacco, coffee and the fruits or grains of which fermented drinks are made are grown on fertile land, which is thereby excluded from producing food which someone, perhaps the very labourers on this land, could well

use. And although the area needed to supply these things to a single person may not be great, the aggregate consumption by teeming modern populations represents a huge drain on the earth's bounty, which even without this additional burden is strained almost beyond its limit by humanity's multitudinous demands. It is clear that the greater man's consumption of unnecessary luxuries becomes, the more he reduces the areas of the earth which remain to support the natural vegetation and the free animals of all sorts which dwell in it. These also seem to deserve a portion of this planet, to whose beauty and interest they add immeasurably. Thus, despite the emancipation of slaves and helots, the feast of which we are the unseen spectators has not achieved true conviviality in the literal meaning of the word. This sort of entertainment is not living with other creatures to the best of our ability. Our merry-makers are still members of a little closed society, indifferent to the wider fellowship of living beings.

Let us now turn to the ascetic and see how the situation stands with him. He sits alone, eating his frugal meal of rice or bread, garden vegetables and fruits, washed down with pure water. Not for him the rich, surfeiting viands, the wine that loosens tongues and weakens self-control. How unsocial, how brutish, his solitary repast in contemplative silence! But this is to see only with the corporeal eye, while that of the spirit remains tightly shut. The ascetic is not alone; he shares his repast with unseen companions. Because of his abstemiousness, many a creature of the most varied kinds, which if he followed the thoughtless, luxury-seeking existence of the multitude would have been either directly or indirectly destroyed, is now enjoying life. Other men, too, have more because he takes less. Whether near or far, these beneficiaries of his frugality are his commensals, the sharers of his meal. He lives with them rather than at their expense. He, not the feaster at the overladen table, is the true convivialist, in the literal meaning of the word.

Doubtless to many this seems a perverse use of intelligence, so to permit our wandering thoughts to destroy our spontaneous enjoyment of a situation which the natural man regards as a source of great pleasure, while it exalts a mode of life that to him is anything but attractive. But this reversal of naïve appraisals is the inevitable result, or expression, of spirituality, as I understand the term. Placed at the festive board that we earlier considered, the intellectual man, the analytic thinker, may see clearly enough the relationship between the superabundance he enjoys and the deprivations and sufferings of other beings, human and non-human. But, if he is merely intellectual, these thoughts will not in the least

diminish his enjoyment of present sensations. The spiritual man, however, can no longer find pleasure in sensations or experiences which he perceives to be purchased at the price of others' pain. In so far as the creatures who suffer to provide gratifications for him are not immediately present, he must possess an analytic intelligence to trace the connection between his actual sensations and the unseen sufferings of others. Thus spirituality, in any high degree, appears to consist of intelligence plus something else. It might be defined as the capacity to have our enjoyments, or our sufferings, heightened or diminished by insight into the wider relationships and more remote consequences of our activities. Hence the spiritual man differs from the sensual man by the possession of both greater intelligence and more responsive affections, and from the merely intellectual man by his greater emotional sensitivity. He adds zest to his meagre repast by picturing to himself the creatures which benefit by his frugality; he abhors the wanton banquet because he cannot close his spirit's eye to the suffering and destruction for which it is responsible.

It appears, then, that asceticism, not in its harsher aspects but at least to the extent of studied frugality, is the inevitable reaction of the spiritual man who contemplates his position as an animal with rather large and complex needs placed in a world crowded with sentient life. His frugality is the most perfect expression of his awareness of and solicitude for the multiform life around him. The ascetic does not scorn happiness; like everybody else, he is compelled by the structure of his own mind to seek the greatest happiness, the highest ultimate good, as he sees it. All the great ascetic systems, such as Stoicism, Jainism and monastic Buddhism, have been carefully planned procedures to ensure perfect and unshatterable happiness to those who consistently practised them. But the founders of these disciplines saw that free indulgence in sensual pleasures was not the road to happiness; for such gratifications are all too commonly procured at the price of much suffering by other creatures and even a balance of pain by the one who pursues them.

Asceticism, of the sort which strives towards true conviviality, need not and should not extend to things of the spirit. Born of spirituality, it becomes untrue to its source when it strives to cramp or depress the spirit's life. All the happiness which can be derived from the contemplation or pursuit of truth, beauty and goodness, from the cultivation of friendship, seems wholly compatible with asceticism in the things of the flesh. Indeed, frugality in food and drink, the avoidance of excessive luxury, is the regimen which best fits the spirit for a satisfying life in its own sphere.

Our crassly materialistic modern

civilization commonly underestimates the mind's capacity to create its own felicity with few or no material supports. Even in early childhood it demonstrates this capacity to a remarkable degree. When children straddle a stick and imagine they are riding a spirited horse, when they set three chairs in a row and fancy they are taking a long journey on a railroad train, must we not concede that the material component of their enjoyment bears about the same proportion to the mental component as the mass and complexity of a stick to those of a horse, or those of three chairs to a railroad train? Apparently this spontaneous tendency of the spirit to lead its own life more or less independently of the physical *milieu* has, in an evolutionary way, been repressed by the necessity to take a more realistic view of things in order to survive; and society for its own ends leads the child out of the realm of fancy into the harsh kingdom of economics. Yet the sight of children at imaginative play should serve to remind us in what region true felicity is to be found.

Doubtless there are also social gaieties which are compatible with the sort of asceticism that we have been discussing, because they are innocent in the sense that they do not rest upon the exploitation and suffering of other beings. But it is difficult to find such innocent social diversions except within the context of an innocent society. Or if perfect innocence is incompatible with survival in a world constituted like ours, we should at least demand a society imbued with compassion, which makes innocence the ideal which it strenuously strives to realize. In a civilization whose very festivities reek of exploitation and the slaughterhouse, innocent social diversions are difficult to find. In such an ambient, the ascetic who would be truly convivial must, paradoxically, pass much of his life in solitude.

ALEXANDER F. SKUTCH

REVIVAL OF BUDDHA DHARMA

Ryusaku Tsunoda's article, "Reflections on Buddhism and Its Problems," in *The Review of Religion* for March 1957 traces the spread of Buddhism and its vicissitudes as a world religion. The author finds hopeful signs of Buddhism's coming into its own—in the Indian Government's decision to restore sacred Buddhist sites in India, in Ceylon's proposed encyclopædia of Buddhism in English, prepared through international collaboration, in the Burmese State University's encouraging mutual understanding through advanced study of both the Northern and Southern Schools of Buddhism and in the holding of International Buddhist Conferences.

Challenging the idea that Buddha's teaching was "one of barren negation," the writer feels that Buddhism has always been in the making, and stresses the unity of the three forms of Buddha, who is the light that enlightens others, the one in many and many in one.

S.R.

SARVODAYA AND GRAM-RAJ

[In our April issue appeared an article on "The New Order," by the **Rev. Ralph Richard Keithan,** who had promised to complete his survey of this very important subject in a second instalment. He does it in the following essay.

Shri Keithan enunciates a few definite moral principles essential for real reconstruction of the Indian village. At present their practice is lacking. In his view, the starved and illiterate villagers possess a spirit of sacrifice, of simplicity and mental integrity rarely to be found in the masses of other lands. He would like the village helper to make right use of this slumbering spirit by a correct attitude; the villager dislikes superimposed officialdom, either from government employees or from social servants. The spirit of sacrifice and simplicity can be evoked by humility; the helper must become a learner. The article points out that the starting point of reform should be the hut of the family, wherein life rotates round the mother. Thoreau is right when he advises: "Instead of noblemen, let us have noble villages of men."

Shri Keithan's views should be respectfully considered; he has served the village for many long years and there is the strength of truth in his plea. Economic prosperity and even the gift of education are of secondary importance; moral prosperity must be thought of first; not only by precept but also by the example of Right Living, the official and the non-official helper must take the first step in serving the village and bring to its face the smile of joy.—ED.]

A new force is working in the villages of South India, and especially in the Madurai District. The *Sarvodaya* spirit has entered the situation to a small extent. That is, over two hundred villages have given *gramdan*. The significance of this is that these villages to some small extent have appreciated the fact of human solidarity. They have put their lands into a pool of common trust. They have declared that there shall be hereafter no involuntary landless agricultural labourers in their villages. They have recognized the principle of periodical land distribution in the village according to need. They recognize the evil of absentee landlordship and of hired labour. There is a beginning of the understanding of the importance of the stewardship of the soil and of all the land in the vicinity of the village by all in the village. Today there is much waste land about the village. It may be Government *peramboke*; it may be a rocky hillside; it may be an unused roadside or tank-bed. All this land must be put to use. If the village takes responsibility for all the land together, then slack employment or unemployment may be the means of rendering a proper stewardship of local natural resources. And, of course, meaningful employment and reward is given to the unemployed. The movement of such to the cities is checked. Then the strength to bring needed amenities to the village is discovered.

Since my last article the Tirumangalam villages have had two village leaders' conferences. This is a step towards local leadership and initiative. That will come only gradually; but it is coming. The present *Sarvodaya* workers must patiently foster it. Until the villagers take the initiative from our hands, until they feel the movement as their own, until *they* call us to their side to help them in this important task, this *Sarvodaya* movement in the Madurai District will not bear much significant fruit. Key workers have been involved in the closing stages of Vinobaji's programme in the Tamilnad. They are busy with many commitments that have come out of their past. The intensive movement towards *taluk-dan* has slowed down. It is good that it is so. The people must catch up with us. They must have time to chew and digest the rich and heavy diet that has been given them. This is necessary before they can make it their own. When *Sarvodaya* or *gram-raj* becomes their own living concern, then the end already envisaged by the workers will be soon realized. *Gram-raj* will be a fact.

As Vinobaji left the Madurai District, many of the workers met him. This is the custom of the Bhoodan Movement. It is decentralized. Constantly one group of workers hands over to another. The released energy returns to the task left behind as the Movement has proceeded. In his talk to us, as usual, he put his sensitive finger on the real gain of recent weeks. It was not the fact of two hundred *gram-dans* in the District; it was the fact of a new fellowship among the workers symbolized by the Sarvodaya Mandal, a fellowship of workers to advise the *Sarvodaya* villages as they proceed in the realization of *gram-raj*. This Mandal has no authority except that of its experience and dedication. It will carry on no institutional work or programme. But it will sympathetically advise the pioneer as pioneering goes on together. It is a new type of service for the villagers which they may or may not make use of as they desire.

We need to keep in mind some incidents which have come to our attention while bringing the villagers to the fact of *gram-dan*. The Government of Madras has started a co-operative pattern in the Valundur village near Usilampatty. As we worked for *gram-dan* in surrounding villages, the cry was, "Get out! We have had enough of Valundur experience! Let us alone! We shall stay in our mess of poverty rather than have all the difficulties of Government interference experienced in Valundur."

In their enthusiasm and misguided concern Governmental officers have done much *for* the people of Valundur. Observing the good results of co-operation in China, the Government evidently felt that we might well enjoy the advantages of such a method. But they little appreciate

the fact that the co-operation of the present Co-operative Department is paternalistic. It was bound to be, as it was born in an imperialistic situation. I would also raise the question whether we can have a healthy co-operation in the Government Department if we do not have it in our joint-family system, in our school system—when in the life of the child there is so little creative co-operation of the kind which we now find in a school of true Basic Education. However that may be, the fact is that the Government programme in Valundur has failed to secure the approval of the villager, both within the village concerned and in surrounding villages. I say I am grateful for the fact. *It will help the Government and all of us to realize that the villager resents any superimposed help or programme.* He wants, as do we all, an integrity of living which comes only when we are vitally a part of its important decisions and fundamental processes.

Again, one like myself must recognize that the villager often has grave defects. Caste, for example, is still a very serious fact that must be reckoned with. The patience of a superman is needed. I have found it most difficult to get a scavenger, for example, out of the terrible place of exploitation he now finds himself in or into a relationship of creative co-operation that is demanded of us all if we are to have a healthy "socialistic pattern of society." More often than not the leather-worker hates the craft that symbolizes his slavery. To say the least, he finds it well-nigh impossible to understand an "idealistic Keithan" who would help him make it a dignified craft through which he might serve mankind even as well as the *Guru* or *Rishi*. It is much more difficult than that! Why make sandals when society will not pay a just price for them but pays manifold more for a mere spoke in a bureaucratic machine? I have had my joys in working with the lowest of the village when at Gandhi Gram. But one must not belittle the tremendous problems involved. Caste is a very real problem in the present village situation; elections have not made our *gram-dan* work easier in the Madurai area.

But we have great resources. I believe that the village culture is fundamentally good. Though paternalistic, the village spirit does respond to a sacrificial spirit. Witness the fact of the Bhoodan Movement itself. Could any other than our rich Indian village culture respond at such a high level as has been seen during Vinobaji's movement?

In the area in which I am perhaps most keenly interested in Madurai District one family has given one-sixth of its land, one-thirteenth of its wealth. If there were no other way I would be ready to throw myself, and the work I have undertaken, upon the mercies of that family for the rest of my life. I have full trust they would give me

full support. Equally I am ready to give myself to the Indian villager in general. I may not get a very comfortable living, but I am convinced I will get the best he has to give! What greater resource can one have than the love of the people?

In the Batlagundu area we have a Basic Education Training School, of which I have the privilege to be the Correspondent, with a most co-operative staff. This is an intense Basic School area. The local Inspector of schools is enthusiastic about his work; the Advisor to the Government for the area is a real partner in the enterprise. Who could ask for more? Then, on either side of us will be two strong Gandhian institutions carrying on similar work, to whom we may constantly turn for fellowship and co-operation. This may sound like an ideal situation, but I humbly suggest that such favourable situations can be found in almost every part of India! Let us get at this thrilling work!

We must build the New Society: the "casteless, classless society." It must be fundamentally a work of the people themselves. A sympathetic outsider can help, but he must become one of the people. The *Panchayat* must become as real as it once was in the past. It will be the vital "governmental process" in this development programme. Perhaps the most valuable help a trained "outsider" can give is that of assistance in the training of the new type of village leadership that is needed. Constantly we are reminded of the need of workers at this village level. I am not concerned about the workers that may come from high schools and colleges. I hope they will come as real servants of the people. But as Kagawa, the great peasant and labourer friend in Japan, once said to me, "Do not bother about the educated; train the people themselves; they will be your sure workers!" That is a task to which we must now put our hands, right in the village and the work itself. That task will test us in all ways as nothing else we have yet done in the Village Movement.

I believe the village home is the key to the opening of this new life. The mother is to be one of the most important factors in the realization of the "Kingdom of Love." I am growingly convinced that Gandhi Gram was right when it set itself primarily to the task of the training of women rural-welfare workers. But we do not even begin to have an idea of what this new home must be like! What are the values of the old joint-family system that must be conserved? What are the new patterns of a creative co-operative home that should be introduced? What is vital "family planning" in the largest sense of the term? What is the important place of the natural family in the village family, in the national

family, in the human family?

If *Sarvodaya* has taught us anything—rather, if the saints have made any fundamental contribution to humanity—it is this: that human values are supreme in the world. It is at this point that each one of us must be constantly sensitive. "Even unto the least of these" was the motto that inspired the *Sarvodaya* concept and programme. But as we strive in the building of the New Society I often feel that even the best of us tend to act as though our own kind were better than those of "the lowly and the lost." It is no easy matter to love one's neighbour as oneself. Yet many of us profess such a religion. We insist that our religion is of the highest. We even strive to convert others to what is all too much a religion of ritual, of form, yes, hypocrisy! I take it that, when religion is real, it is its own attraction. But the point is that we must live in a neighbourly way in this New Society. When we have "servants," hire "*dhobies*," use "sweepers," we are not maintaining that "reverence for life" that is absolutely essential to the *Sarvodaya* society as I conceive it. I do not even raise the question of reverence for all of it. I take it that if there cannot be reverence for all human beings there can never be a true "reverence for life." *And it hurts me constantly to see Christians or Gandhians or other lofty-soaring people treat others as less than "brothers" and "sisters."* All this becomes more difficult when we try to use the machine to serve all of mankind! I understand Dr. Kumarappa when he is most concerned lest the Ambar *charkha* (spinning-wheel) become another instrument for the exploitation of mankind. Would that all of us had equally sensitive souls, at least for the "least of these"!

I would share one more concern with my patient reader. Trusteeship is no easy matter in life. We have yet to learn the profound implications of trusteeship of the great resources Nature has surrounded us with. Everywhere I see how we could use the soil more profitably, for ourselves and for future generations. Even a Bishop spoke to me very lightly yesterday as I tried to persuade him of the importance of eating whole foods. At that point I was making an appeal to his own important health. But he seemed more interested in pleasing his own palate than in having a healthy body to serve a needy humanity. The best of *Sarvodaya* workers stumble on the conservation of night-soil for hungry fields. The best of Gandhian institutions have much to learn in the fullest use of the soil. In the light of such conditions what a stupendous task we have in the application of "trusteeship" at the village level! It is one thing to share the great natural blessings. It is another to use them for the highest good of all the people and of future generations.

All this implies constant spiritual growth. The "abundant life" is fundamental to such a "religion." In fact, present organized religion is not sufficient for such a task. Perhaps never has the religious being been so challenged as he is today: to cross all artificial religious boundaries, give the pioneer of life the right hand of fellowship and get at the job of living creatively in an age of science and the machine. I have been concerned primarily with the future *Sarvodaya* village, but I believe my reader, though not a villager, will be able to see the profound implications of all I have been trying to say for his own life.

RALPH RICHARD KEITHAN

CHILDREN OF THE NEW RACE

Very much in the news these days are the gifted children with which America is said to abound. According to a *Newsweek* report (May 13th, 1957), there are at present approximately 330,000 exceptionally gifted youngsters in the United States. Till recently not much notice was being taken of such talented children, but this year, we are told, "the trend has been distinctly in the direction of a frank seeking out and special conditioning of outstanding talent."

A short account is given of 10-year-old Robert Strom, the best-known gifted child in America, who won an all-time record $192,000 on a television quiz show. He learned to read at 3 and to type at 4. He learned French at an early age and at present "is studying Hebrew, boning up on the Morse code, drilling with a sub-teen army (as a corporal), working for his science club, and warming up for Little League baseball." When his classmates are studying arithmetic, Robert is assigned special maths. puzzles. He has curiosity, and plunges from one interest to another, but is something of a *dilettante* and often finishes none of the endeavours he engages in.

May it not well be that young Robert Strom and thousands of others like him are in reality the pioneers of a coming new race which will silently come into existence at its proper time; the forerunners of a future cycle of evolution when average humanity will have attained a growth and development that in the present age appear miraculous to the profane? These peculiar children are making an increasing appearance on the world scene, especially in the "New World," and as their numbers become greater with every age, one day they may awake to find themselves in a majority.

What more satisfying and rational explanation of these exceptional children can be offered save that the talents and aptitudes they display early in life are brought from another birth? It is to be hoped that the development of such children, "geniuses" as they are called, will not be forced into narrow grooves and that their nature will be well rounded and wholesomely balanced. We might also remind our readers of what was pointed out in our pages last month, that mere intellectual development, which is often eccentric, one-sided and evanescent, should not be confused with the manifestations of the true genius which are the efforts of the immortal Soul to assert itself in the outward daily life of the person.

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

WORLD CULTURE AND THE WRITTEN WORD

Literature is more than one of the fine arts; it is an interpreter among them, and between them and the learned disciplines, as also between faith and faith, revealing their common core of truth. A thoughtful inquiry into *what constitutes literature*—and especially literature in the English language, fast becoming the world's *lingua franca*—is therefore most germane to the concept of world culture and the essential oneness of the human family.

This fundamental question is raised by implication in the Special Autumn Number of *The Times Literary Supplement*, that of August 17th, 1956. It is devoted to an interesting collaborative effort to define the frontiers of literature, applying its criteria not only to the *belles-lettres* but also to peripheral and even debatable fields, with pertinent comments on the contributory achievements of the makers of books and the illustrators thereof. Different aspects of the subject are explored by many thoughtful writers. The literary distinction of some of the contributors shines through a common anonymity.

The opening editorial, "Literature as an Art," tells us that the examination of the impact of literary style on different types of writing has been undertaken "in the hope of catching a glimpse, from time to time, of that Protean shape, literature itself." Defining style as "the question of finding a language appropriate to a theme" broadens to the horizon the field of good writing, but a truer criterion of literature is offered in the recognition that, "at the heart of any good book, on whatever subject, an illumination will be found." Critics of the day may differ as to whether this illumination comes from "a true flame" or "a mere marsh-light." Time casts the deciding vote.

There is Great Literature and Immortal Literature; it may be questioned whether any writing falls in the latter category if it be not touched with what Longinus called "the true sublime [which] by some virtue of its nature elevates us." The mystic's ideas may vibrate long in the *Akasha*. Even he, however, can hope for immortality for the words in which he sets down partially his realization only if he wields a flame-tipped pen, arousing aspiration in his readers and strengthening their moral stamina.

There is some inevitable overlapping of the essayists' themes. The interpreters of the natural sciences and the mathematicians make their bows in "The Language of Scholarship" as well as in "Interpreting Science" and "Words of Mathematicians"; and "Religious Writing" encroaches on the fields of drama, prose and poetry. But the picture gains depth and perspective from the differences in the writers' points of view.

The rapid tempo of change in this century is brought out in "The Climate of Taste":—

> A Shakespeare, a Pope, a Wordsworth, a Dickens, a Yeats stand out as peaks, but between them the pattern of changing taste moves in sweeping undulations from period to period. In the past the periods have generally been comparatively long. In this century they have been short.

This, our Hindu friends will tell us, but befits the accelerating tempo of the *Kali Yuga*. That we are living in a period of transition is obvious, and "though the war is over it has been followed by something not less disturbing

—the hostility of a Power that seeks to attack *through the mind.*"

Homelessness, restlessness and indeterminateness may characterize modern society, but the large number of works of travel, war, autobiography and history reflect "the wide interest in all this as human, factual and imaginative, of the present or of the past." The spate of autobiographies, travel books, political memoirs and personal stories on journalistic lines by non-professional writers is indeed noted in the essay, "In Search of the Self," as a challenge to the professional writer.

Several gifted writers are described in "Experiment in Prose" as having escaped the "flagging but still challenging ogre of the novel" in autobiography, books of travel or the personal story. Some modern critics' prophecy of the death of the novel has proved premature, but the fact that despite the experimental efforts of a few post-war novelists, the novel has halted in its march is admitted by the writer. He assures us, however, that "there is no loss of faith" and suggests that perhaps "the novelists are waiting until they come to terms with their time," "when the world begins to write its own confused, massive and world-shaking novel."

We need not linger over the difficulties of the writers of "The Parliamentary Novel," not the least of which is "how to make the whole politician into a whole man."

The sustained "illusion of involvement," as indispensable to the successful novelist as to the film producer, is illuminatingly discussed in an essay so entitled. Whether the writer's aim be to entertain or to give a new vision of life, energy, concern for truth and compassion—which too few novelists exhibit towards their characters—are the prescription offered. "In the contemplation of the miseries of the humble [of 'courage and sensibility burning obscurely in those dim lives'] a reader can feel again that strange pride in humanity which only great art can engender."

"Experiment in Verse" mentions "the new conservatism in poetics," reporting a retreat, along an extended front, from the "modern movement" in poetry as perhaps "a splendid irrelevance," though through it one could sometimes almost "grasp a grand universal statement."

The new rational conservative reaction was certainly called for .... Yet, though reason has its rights, the imagination and the obscurer depths of our intuitive apprehension, these have their rights, too .... The poet must always explore.

The author of the essay on "A Theatre of Writers" refers to "a notable effort to throw a bridge over the gap which exists in this country between the practice of dramatic art and other kinds of literature." A strange state of things in the land of Shakespeare, Sheridan and Goldsmith, not to mention later lesser lights! Still more arresting is the reference to the hero of Mr. John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger,* who, "racked with uncertainty and rotten with self-pity," "challenges acceptance as a young man representative of the age." On the hopeful side it is conceded that some of the young playwrights "with more courage than any of their heroes show are trying hard to disengage from the present anarchic confusion of values a meaning that will square with their own experience." The essay concludes with the hope

> that those now chiefly concerned with contemporaneity will press beyond those limits to truth older and larger and of unusual [*sic.* Read "Universal"?] application. ...

"The Literary Artist in America" in the nineteenth century is described as having been forced by his antecedents and his social setting into "an acute awareness of his relation to society and the universe." "An anguish of isolation" was said to have led him to explore the

devices of symbolism long before that anguish had similarly gripped his Europeon *confrère*. "Literature in this *genre* is a device for making a point or uncovering a truth." Language itself as a form of symbolism is a theory which America is reported to be taking up with enthusiasm. Purely literary values, it is implied, have a better chance for cultivation in the contemporary American cultural climate than ever before.

In "The Regional Setting" it is maintained that regional writing cannot fade, for, in John Buchan's words,

> ...the ordinary stuff of humanity is deep in local affections, a devotee, in Edmund Burke's famous words, of "all the little quiet rivulets that water an humble, a contracted, but not an unfruitful field.

The writer of the delightfully imaginative and sympathetic study of "The Child's Road to Literature" declares that if children's tales whose writers "feel the pulse of kinship between man and beast," for example, *Tarka the Otter* by Henry Williamson and Dhan Gopal Mukerji's *Gay Neck*, "do not reach the frontiers of literature, they come near enough to set them alight." Walter de la Mare's *Peacock Pie* "is for the writer of children's literature the true way in." Of N. Karazin, the author of *Cranes Flying South*, translated from the Russian, it is said that "he knows how to set the human heart afire." And is not that the power of great literature of any *genre*?

"Towards the Condition of Music," to which according to Pater, all art constantly aspires, gives the title to an interesting study of writing that approaches music, though it is recognized that literature by its very nature must always fall short of the harmony which is described as the natural language of music. "Literature approaches music, however, when it uses incantation ... by a reiteration of images," as in certain poems by Dame Edith Sitwell and by Mr. Ezra Pound, whose "Cantos" also, in their inter-weaving of images, "constitute a sustained attempt to reproduce the sense of simultaneous and universal experience that music provides." But, alas for our day, the verdict is that "if experiment still flickers round the perimeter, the prevailing mood at the centre is dour and disabused and sceptical of change."

The essay on "Religious Writing" traces English religious writing down the centuries. The writer mentions "the eternal popular hunger for an expression of religion that is also in some degree literature. We are assured that "the stream of religious exposition and devotion still flows strongly and well." The prose output is considerable. It is " 'engaged' literature," no doubt, but sometimes penned in an arresting style. The religious drama seems to be a main form which religious writing takes in our day. Mr. Christopher Fry's play, *The Dark Is Light Enough,* in which "the religious note sounds like an underlying tune beneath and through the brilliance, skill and wit," is described as "most triumphantly a frontier play" (between religion and literature). The style of the religious poets of today, however, while sometimes, as in the hands of T. S. Eliot, achieving "great beauty and power," is described as "a style fitted to our questioning dubieties"; not for the modern poet is the idiom of Herbert, Vaughan or Traherne, or of Low, who "wrote of spiritual regeneration with the passion and beauty of poetry."

It is suggested in connection with the poetry of Mr. David Jones ("here and there ... reminiscent of Blake, but ... less apocalyptic, less of a poet with blazing things to say") that "an obscure, fragmented picture of religion suits with our contemporary taste." So much the worse for contemporary taste! Analysis is doubtless the thought-form of our age, but synthesis and an all-inclusive pattern have ever characterized the true religious insight.

In "Poetry and Belief" a more hopeful note is struck:—

> Whatever its underlying basis of belief the great poetry of our time is a poetry of psychological insight and human compassion based on self-knowledge.

Who would deny admission to the fane of literature to the historian capable of giving us a living sense of kinship with our fellow men who passed across the stage before us? It may indeed be dubious, as is maintained in "The Sense of the Past," whether the total result of the popularization of history in our century is likely to endure as literature in its own right. But the "sensitiveness akin to poetry" in some of Professor Toynbee's parenthetical comments on the process of things in history is noted, and Professor Knowles's history of English monasticism is said to soar "high above the realm of academic history."

Scholars addressing the larger lay audience of the present "golden age of popularization" are conceded by the writer of "The Language of Scholarship" a generally high standard of non-technical writing, but he comments witheringly on the "fine writing," "whimsicality" and "uneasy jauntiness" of some academic revealers of the mysteries of the learned disciplines to the profane. Despite the sometimes unavoidable handicap of jargon in handling technical subjects, however, "the learned disciplines have their stylists and their occasional masterpieces." Their literary merits are ascribed largely to "the transparency which allows the light of reason to shine through the words."

"For more than 2,000 years notable contributions to the literature of the world have been made by mathematicians," writes the author of the essay entitled "Words of Mathematicians." He confines himself to the Western tradition from Plato onwards, but India also had her famous twelfth-century mathematician, Bhaskara, whose *Leelavathi* in Sanskrit has been called "as lovely in its music as it is profound in its mathematics." Clarity, brilliance, economy, cleanness and purity of style, elegance and symmetry, are named here as characteristics of mathematicians' writings and sometimes these add up to literary excellence. Bertrand Russell has written:—

> Mathematics, rightly viewed, possesses not only truth but supreme beauty—a beauty cold and austere, like that of sculpture...yet sublimely pure, and capable of a stern perfection such as only the greatest art can show.

The outlook for the scientist's admission to the literary field does not seem to the writer of "Interpreting Science" to be very bright. It had, he writes, been suggested that "science lies dangerously beyond the frontiers of literature so long as its technical language lacks interpretation," and that "only the humanizing influence of philosophy can draw it back within the civilized pale." It is reassuring that, at least in England, the problem of the philosophy of science, the finding of "language adequate to meet the demands of experience," is being taken with increasing seriousness, even at the universities.

"That variety of frontierman of the realm of letters who is the philosopher" is discussed under the caption "Philosophy and Expression." "Plato is a great writer as well as a great philosopher." Style is conceded to the classical British philosophers and "the tradition of style" in British philosophy has not died out. The writer offers as the criterion of the philosopher's style, how far he succeeds in so manipulating words "that their growth of meaning is conveyed and they shed a light that does not belong to them in other contexts."

Most journalistic writing is "Prose of the Moment," but the writer of the essay of that name considers descriptive journalism, as distinct from the polemical or hortatory, propaganda and criticism to offer the surest basis for regarding journalism as a form of litera-

ture. "The significant writer" is described as "the stone that ripples the lake to its farthest margins."

Slogan-makers with a flair for the dynamic idea and an unconscious sense of the *mantramic* quality of sounds can do that. What could have been more disconcerting to entrenched privilege in the fourteenth century than the couplet

> When Adam dolve, and Eve span,
> Who was then the gentleman?

But the journalist's influence is not always ephemeral. We agree with the writer that

> ...even if only by one-millionth part of a millimetre, the world and mankind a century hence may be different from what they are and might have been, because of today's poem or pamphlet—or editorial.

But without "freedom to write with integrity, to state fully what is seen and heard and experienced," it is indeed unlikely that the journalist will produce "anything recognizable as literature."

The writer does well to point out also that "writing to order" is not a phenomenon of a single part of the world today. The pressure to conformity is one of the greatest present dangers to literature as it is to all expression of the stirrings of the human mind and spirit.

The author of the "Areopagitica" would have taken vigorous issue with the writer of the essay on "Freedom and Restraint." Granting the evils of pornographic and subversive writing and writing glorifying brutality and crime, we should reject firmly the proposition that "expert examination, selection and criticism... ought to precede popularization." Mankind surely has too long been cursed with the intellectual extinguishers known as blind creeds, religious or political, to open the citadel willingly to a new orthodoxy, even one with culture on its banners.

The publisher, the typographer, the illustrator and the independent craftsmen whose skills contribute, under the typographer's unifying influence, to the finished book, are brought into the picture in two valuable essays: "Servant of the Words" and "The Style of the Book." The writer of the former essay sees every book "which is at once lucid in the exposition of its subject-matter and distinguished in the character and taste of its typography" as "always the result of a close and fruitful alliance between writer and printer."

"New Patterns of Society" are no doubt emerging, but irrefutable evidence is claimed by the writer of the essay bearing the title for the fact that "not only books, but good books, are selling in quantities inconceivable before the war." Interest in archæology and history has enormously increased, but the essayist warns that, though the past can illuminate the present for us, "in this age of moral and cultural flux we must be involved, as never before, with the problems of our own day and age."

The essayist pleads in conclusion the need for

> some forum where the whole vast living issue can be thrashed out; where philosopher, scientist, sociologist, historian and imaginative writer can exchange their views and work together for our common profit....English literature could not but be the richer for it.

E. M. H.

PROBLEMS OF BUDDHIST HISTORY*

As one of the sublimest religions of mankind, as well as one of the finest creations of the Indian genius, Buddhism has given rise to an enormous amount of literature in the various European languages. The bulk of it is deficient in either scholarship or sympathetic understanding, and it is, generally speaking, a somewhat heart-breaking business to have to review the latest additions to the crop. With some alacrity I therefore responded to the invitation to say a few words about Bhikshu Sangharakshita's new *Survey of Buddhism*. Written from the inside, with an experience of Buddhist meditation, his book is illumined by the sympathetic insight which comes to believers alone, and is guarded against the grotesque misunderstandings which abound in the works of agnostic outsiders, however "scientific" they may deem themselves to be. At the same time he has a scrupulous respect for the letter of the tradition, has spared no pains to ascertain it, and his scholarship is as faultless as it can humanly be. If one wants to mediate between East and West, it naturally helps to be part of both. So it was with Coomaraswamy, and so it is with Sangharakshita. He is a relatively young Englishman, once a Major in the Indian Army, who took the yellow robe after the last war, and ever since has worked indefatigably in India for the Maha Bodhi Society. By acting as his publishers, the Indian Institute of World Culture has lived well up to its name. For whatever the exact shape of the coming world culture may turn out to be, Buddhism is bound to be one of the ingredients which will go into the making of it.

The value of *A Survey of Buddhism* lies in its detail, and there can be no question of giving a brief summary of the 500 pages of this valuable and comprehensive work. It must be read and studied from cover to cover, and, as the years pass, the student will be constantly tempted to refer back to its pages here and there. What I propose to do by way of introducing it to the readers of THE ARYAN PATH is to say a few words about the fundamental problems of *evaluation* which confront all those who write a history of Buddhist thought. For this, to be successful, is not a mere matter of collecting more and more facts. However objective he may be, an historian must come to a decision on at least two controversial points: First of all he must make up his mind whom to count as a "Buddhist," and which, if any, of the self-styled Buddhists to exclude. And, secondly, not all those who are included are likely to have an equally good grasp of the Buddha's doctrine, and the historian will have to treat some of the doctrines as more orthodox and profound than others. These two weighty questions cannot possibly be shunned, although to tackle them in earnest is like putting one's hands into a hornet's nest.

The use of the word "Buddhism" is in itself not a very propitious beginning. The recent spread of universal education has its good points, and in any case it is inevitable. Nevertheless it has clearly some disadvantages. One of them is the addiction to abstract nouns of uncertain meaning, such as "democracy," "civilization," "Buddhism," "Christianity," and so on. In themselves these terms are incapable of precise definition, and any attempt to give them a definite meaning leads to nothing but ill will and fruitless disputation. "Nobody can be a Christian and support war"; "Christianity forbids divorce and birth-control"; "A belief in the Trinity is essential to all

**A Survey of Buddhism.* By BHIKSHU SANGHARAKSHITA. (The Indian Institute of World Culture, Bangalore. viii+500 pp. 1957. Rs. 15.00; 25*s.*; $3.50)

Christians"; and so on, and so on. The only result of such statements is the exclusion of many, if not most, professed Christians from the speaker's definition of "Christianity." Likewise, where "Buddhism" is discussed, we hear that "no Buddhist can eat meat," "married monks are not really Buddhist monks," and "the Pali Canon alone contains the pure Buddhadhamma." The futility of such remarks is easy to see, for they cannot possibly be based on scriptural authority. In the New Testament the word "Christian" occurs three times in all, in each case as a term used by non-Christians. It would therefore be quite impossible to build up a definition of the word "Christian" from what the New Testament says about it. Likewise, in the Buddhist Scriptures the words "Buddhist" and "Buddhism" occur nowhere at all. Just as Karl Marx protested against being called a "Marxist," so it is quite possible that the Buddha was not a "Buddhist." In any case, if he was one he did not say so. It is true that the term *Buddha-sasana,* "the Buddha's teaching," is used sometimes, but always in a vague sense, tending more to edification than to precise definition.

Until Europeans wrote about them, the "Buddhists" were happily unaware that they were "Buddhists." What they were preaching, practising and meditating about was not "Buddhism," but the "holy Dharma." This Dharma, or spiritual truth, exists in a number of separate traditions, or schools. Any one who wants to understand it more deeply must entrust himself to *one* of those lines of transmission, which will convey to him a knowledge of the practices by which alone an experience of the Dharma can be gained. It is this spiritual experience which has been the life-blood of "Buddhism," and it is only in particular schools that this life-blood circulates, just as it does in *particular* horses, and not in a general and abstract "horse" as such. "Buddhism" is an abstraction, coined by unbelievers for their own convenience. "Buddhism" in general has never done anything, nor can it ever do anything—except perhaps provide an excuse for a few more international conferences. The true life of the Dharma lies in the quiet of the meditation rooms, and it is directed not by microphones, but by the voice of the *Guru* gently handing down the wisdom of the past. In the very first pages of his book, Sangharakshita explains that "the scientific study of Buddhism" can have "a merely subordinate and instrumental value." No more can be expected of it than a preliminary survey of the field of possible interpretations of the Dharma, which may help to guide some readers to a more thorough exploration of one of them.

Both in Christianity and in Buddhism we can distinguish between a *central* and a *sectarian* tradition. Christianity originated in the Eastern Mediterranean, and it is there that the central tradition developed. In the outlying districts of Europe, *e.g.,* in Wales, Scotland and Sweden, at the confines of the sea, or in Wittenberg and Bohemia, at the very borders of Mediterranean culture, the Christian faith then appeared in quite new and unexpected guises. As the living tradition had not sufficient strength to penetrate quite to this distance, it was replaced by fanciful ideas which claimed to go back directly to the "original gospel," and which represented the battered remains of a mighty tradition as the "only pure" doctrine.

A similar state of affairs can be discerned in "Buddhism," which originated in the North of India. It is thereabouts that its central tradition took shape, and it is near there, in Tibet, that it has been best preserved. This is the *madhyadesha,* the "middle region," where, if we believe the *Astasahasrika* (xvii. 336), a Bodhisattva likes to be reborn, because it is in the centre of things. But when in the course of its expan-

sion Buddhism spread to the *pratyanta-janapada,* to the border regions, there, at the confines of the sea, in Ceylon and Japan, its mentality became not unakin to that of the Protestants in the outlying districts of Europe. In fact, Ceylonese Theravada and Japanese Zen both reject the living tradition of Buddhism, the latter in the name of a "direct transmission outside the Scriptures," the former in the name of a Pali Canon which alone is alleged to preserve the original "Buddha-word."

As vehicles of spiritual attainment, the central and the peripheral tradition of Buddhism are both equally effective. Holiness, gentle calm and serenity, wisdom and piety, are not the monopoly of one school, and in this all-important sphere of religious virtue neither side has a perceptible advantage over the other. It is only when we consider the relatively trifling accomplishment of writing a "history of Buddhism" that the central, universalist, interpretation of the Dharma possesses an unquestionable superiority. For it is as good as impossible to write the history of a religion on sectarian lines. Among Christians, such a "history" will consist of three phases: First the original gospel, soon neglected; then a long period of darkness; then a rediscovery of the original gospel by some unlikely individual in some outlying place at the very edge of the civilized world. For the Theravadins it will run like this: The original gospel, spoken in Pali (!) by the Buddha, taken to Ceylon about 250 B.C., then forgotten everywhere else, and preserved alone by virtuous Ceylonese and those others who received it from them. How this reminds us of Calvinism, with its few children of the light, and its vast "mass of perdition"!

The exclusive sectarian method must reduce the history of Buddhism to that of one little sect. The remaining sects fall by the wayside, or are mentioned only for the enormity of their deviations. By contrast the inclusive method would count as "Buddhists" all those who claim to be followers of the Dharma. This inclusive method was practised in Tibet, for instance by Buston in the thirteenth century, and, with a wider geographical horizon, the author has worked on the same lines. It appears to be the only way in which a balanced Buddhist history can be written.

Now as to our second question: Confronted with dozens and dozens of conflicting schools, the historian cannot avoid regarding some of these as more, others as less significant. Sangharakshita believes that the Buddhist doctrine reached its greatest maturity in the Mahayana. He is not alone in this conviction, which is shared by Murti, Conze and Lamotte, to mention only the most recent authors.

But is this emphasis on the Mahayana not a departure from the impartiality which the historian ought to observe? Is it not merely a way of taking sides in the interminable sectarian squabbles which, in fulfilment of ancient prophecies, threaten to tear apart the Buddhist community, 2,500 years after the Lord Buddha's Nirvana? To have avoided these pitfalls is perhaps the most noteworthy of the Bhikshu's achievements. Like the sages of old he manages to hold to his views without excluding or rejecting those of others. His attitude to the manifold formulations of the Dharma is throughout guided by "the simile of the tree," and I can do no better than quote his own words:—

> It may be said that the Buddha's transcendental realization is the root, His Original Doctrine. . .the trunk, the distinctive Mahayana doctrines the branches, and the schools and sub-schools of the Mahayana the flowers. Now the function of flowers, however beautiful, is to produce fruit. . . .The Bodhisattva Ideal is the perfectly ripened fruit of the whole vast tree of Buddhism. (p. 432)

Nothing could be less contentious. Without hesitation, without any reservation whatever, I recommend Sangha-

rakshita's book as the best survey of Buddhism we possess at present. The light of the Dharma continues to shine even in the spiritual darkness which has overtaken the present age. An effort to ascertain its true meaning is not wasted if we want to lead serene and meaningful lives. As a first guide to it we cannot do better than study Sangharakshita's sober and reverent survey of a tradition which, in its surprisingly diverse manifestations, has given peace to many millions, and which has not yet lost all power to stir the hearts of men.

EDWARD CONZE

Education in New India. By HUMAYUN KABIR. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. x+212 pp. 1956. 21*s.*)

Humayun Kabir is one of the band of highly gifted and devoted administrators who are shaping the destiny of modern India. He was for several years Educational Adviser to the Government and Chairman of the University Grants Commission; under his general guidance immense progress was made far more quickly than anyone would have thought possible ten years ago. He is also a gifted scholar who has enriched our understanding by his writings. In a word, he combines in himself the qualities of the administrator and of the thinker.

In this new book he presents a critical and interpretative evaluation of what is happening in India now, in the field of education. He has gathered together and largely rewritten nine essays and articles which appeared in various journals between 1953 and 1955. He discusses the theory and practice of Basic Education, the reconstruction of secondary education and the function of the Universities. In addition, he considers a number of general problems, such as the position of English, the concept of social education, the causes of indiscipline among university students, and the role of education in modern societies.

The faults and shortcomings in Indian education are well known to all, and they are clearly described by Humayun Kabir: the tendency to copy and only later to adapt institutions and methods not necessarily relevant to India, like the English university; the reliance on a foreign medium of instruction, English; the slow development of technical and scientific education; the frantic concern with examination success. Above all, a tradition of teaching which lays too much emphasis upon formal book learning:—

> Even in the case of children it became more and more an exercise of the memory than a development of intellect, emotions and character. Overmuch concern with books tended to divorce education from the realities of Indian life. It often drew the child away from his social and cultural milieu and encouraged in him a distaste, if not contempt, for manual labour.

Dr. Kabir sees Basic Education as the most important of all devices for correcting this bias, and he thinks of it as one of Mahatma Gandhi's greatest contributions. Yet his admiration is not uncritical. He accepts the principle of "the correlation of intellectual subjects with the environment through the medium of a craft," but warns that it has its limitations. When applied indiscriminately, by teachers who are ignorant of science and who are themselves not very good craftsmen, able to insist upon high standards of competence, it may lead to absurdities. And one might add that it is yet far from certain that Basic Education will suffice or be suitable as a preparation for the massive industrialization and modernization which alone can bring material prosperity to the rapidly increasing population of the Indian subcontinent.

The discussion on the position of English studies is equally cogent and fascinating in its interest. The dilemma is clear. There are powerful reasons for teaching in the vernacular languages at all levels—but there are so many of these languages that this would lead to a deepening of cleavages and a weakening of national unity. Besides, none of the languages of India has yet attained the position of English as a medium for scientific and technical communication. Thus, to abandon it, especially at the University, would raise a barrier to knowledge and hamper necessary modernization. In Dr. Kabir's opinion, the study of English should not begin below the secondary level, and it should be taught only as a functional tool, limiting the study of literature to a minimum.

There is no room here to discuss the remaining chapters. It must suffice to say that all of them are profoundly interesting and compelling in their clarity, cogency and objectivity. One hopes that Dr. Kabir will one day feel tempted to produce a sequel in which he considers other fundamental issues of policy—problems of finance and administration, of the selection and training of teachers, of scientific and technical education. And, on that occasion, may he turn again to the crucial question of the methods by which a true Indian University tradition, combining the best of East and West, can be encouraged to grow and develop. Dr. Kabir has now left administration to devote himself to the reform of Indian education through politics. He has entered Parliament and many of his admirers see in him the future Minister of Education. Should this be a correct prognosis he will certainly bring even more vigour and freshness to the tremendous effort India is making in that vital area of her national life.

J. A. LAUWERYS

Hypnotism and Crime. By HEINZ E. HAMMERSCHLAG. Translated from the German, with a Foreword, by JOHN COHEN. (Rider and Company, London. 148 pp. 1956. 13*s*. 6*d*.)

Many people are tempted to trust the easy generalizations often made about hypnotism, *e.g.*, that it has no harmful effects, and that one cannot be hypnotized into doing anything against one's own moral code. The cases given by Dr. Hammerschlag refute such dangerous propositions. The depth of the hypnosis determines whether the moral faculty can be by-passed, while suggestions can also build up a false appeal to the moral aspect itself, and so lead to the crime. The most recent case given is that recorded exhaustively by the late Dr. Ludwig Mayer, of Heidelberg, in the 1930's. It included vile sexual abuse of the victim and incitement to murder and to suicide; and the hypnotizer received ten years' imprisonment, his accomplice four years'. Dr. Hammerschlag also warns strongly against stage hypnotism, giving, from his own observation, cases of injurious consequences from such "acts." Another important chapter deals with the use of hypnosis and narco-hypnosis for obtaining "confessions" from political scapegoats.

> It is based on the "art" of the most massive suggestion, for which one creates a suitable soil by so exhausting the accused till his consciousness is excluded and then hammering into him the desired content. (p. 58)

This is a book that needs to be read by everyone.

W. E. W.

Character and Conduct. By MUKULBHAI KALARTHI. Translated from the original Gujarati by GURDIAL MALLIK. (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. 48 pp. 1956. 37 *naye paise*)

This book is both interesting and useful. The short narratives cover a wide range of subjects to illustrate what character and conduct are. The narratives and anecdotes are not imaginary but from the lives of great men of most countries, and therefore should be all the more useful to the young, for whom they are primarily intended. These examples reveal that true character and conduct are not confined to any one nation or community, and that the lives of men of integrity and character are inspiring wherever they may be lived.

The English translation is simple and lucid. This booklet should prove a helpful addition to books from which children may learn about the lives of men who have adorned the pages of history.

J. V.

Nawa-i-Waqt. By NIZAMUDDIN S. GOREKAR. (Writers' Emporium Limited, Bombay 1. 104 pp. 1956. Rs. 2.00)

Nawa-i-Waqt embodies critical and biographical articles written in Urdu by the author on various occasions. Some of these articles were also read before learned societies.

The articles written on various prominent Urdu writers and poets, and published in book form for the first time, for several reasons deserve our attention. They show the wide interests and knowledge of the author and his critical ability.

All the articles are written in a scholarly but pleasing style. The author has also given ample quotations from the poets to authenticate his point of view. Professor Gorekar deserves all praise and encouragement for contributing a very useful volume to critical literature in Urdu, which is by no means profuse.

A. Q. SARWARI

Gurjararasavali. Edited by B. K. THAKORE, M. D. DESAI and M. C. MODI. (Gaekwad's Oriental Institute, Baroda, xvi+374 pp. 1956. Rs. 18.00)

This is a collection of six interesting poems in Old Gujarati, composed by six different authors and representing different forms of composition like the ballad (*Rasa, Phagu*), the narrative (*Kavitta*), the prayer (*Vinati*), the religious poem (*Caupai*) and the eulogy (*Pavadau*). The earliest of these is dated 1354 A.D. and the latest 1428 A.D.

Though the authors are all Jains, the first two poems derive their *motif* from the *Mahabharata*; the *Pancapandavacaritarasu* thus describes the marriage of King Shantanu with Ganga, the birth of Gangeya (Bhishma), the divorce of Shantanu and the lonely life led by him for twenty-four years thereafter; and the *Virataparva* is none other than a description of the life spent *incognito* by the Pandavas at the court of King Virata during the thirteenth year of their exile and the revelation of their identity at the end of the period.

The remaining poems are distinctively Jain in theme. The ballad *Neminathaphagu* thus narrates the story of the love between Neminatha, the twenty-second Jain Tirthankara, and Rajimati. Marriage did not follow only because the bridegroom was appalled at the sight of numerous animals massacred for the marriage-feast. The next poem, the *Arbudacalavinati,* appears to

be composed in adoration of the Tirthankaras Neminatha and Rishabhadeva. The *Cihumgaticaupai,* which comes next, is didactic and describes the four painful states of a Soul, according to the Jaina doctrine, in its numerous births. And the last poem, the *Vidyavilasapavadau,* is a heroic poem eulogizing the life and exploits of Vidyavilasa, a legendary hero.

All these poems should be of great value to students of Apabhramsha in general and Old Gujarati and Rajasthani in particular. The Introduction, Glossary and Notes accompanying the poems are intended to aid in this direction. The disagreement noticed sometimes (pp. 284, 364, etc.) between these aids is probably the result of different authorship.

H. G. NARAHARI

Methods of Mental Prayer. By CARDINAL LERCARO. (Burns Oates, Ltd., London. xii+308 pp. 1957. 30*s.*)

It is a weakness of Protestantism that it leaves the cultivation of the spiritual life very largely to chance, in the belief that by so doing it is relying on the grace of God. But why should it be supposed that the God who works by order and measure in nature should do otherwise in the realm of the spirit? Roman Catholicism has its techniques, often psychologically most sound, its manuals of devotion and its experienced directors. It knows of the three steps on the ladder of prayer that leads to God. The lowest rung is discursive prayer, that which is practised by the beginner and for which aids are indispensable. The second is affective prayer, when one who has passed through the preliminary training goes out to God in love. The third is the prayer of simplicity, when effort is lost in contemplation and the adoring soul surrenders itself without reserve to God.

The Cardinal Archbishop of Bologna has written this book as at once a historical survey and a call to prayer in our own day. He traces the development of methods of prayer up to the sixteenth century, and brings us to Monserrat, where, among the pilgrims who visited the shrine and mastered the exercises taught there, we meet with Ignatius Loyola, from whom the first "school" derives. In all, six principal and several subsidiary methods of prayer are set out and illustrated in helpful fashion. A synthesis of these methods is then suggested as a guide for the devotional life, in the first instance, of priest and monk, but also for the layman who is bent on reaching the highest. Affective prayer and the prayer of simplicity do not call for such extensive treatment, and a chapter is devoted to that form of prayer that does not require set periods but can be interwoven into all the business of the day.

It would be of interest to have the comments on such a book of one familiar with the discipline of one of the non-Christian religions. Here, as in Hinduism and Buddhism, a large place is given to meditation; the truth must be apprehended intellectually and dwelt upon till it sinks into the self and becomes a permanent part of it. Yet discipline is never a chain; it is always an instrument of freedom. Even so military a system as that of Loyola is not a rigid one, but may be modified to suit the needs and the state of growth of individuals. The author is certainly right when he alleges that most of us live on "a broad plain of mediocrity" (p. 286); alas, many of us are content that it should be so. For those who are prepared to set their face to the hills, this book will provide, not information only, but guidance also.

E. L. ALLEN

LEAVES FROM A PARIS DIARY

[The contrast between the gloom of some of the plays he wrote about last month and the attitude of the "dynamic and buoyant" writers he describes in these "leaves" draws **Shri Baldoon Dhingra** into a profoundly interesting line of thought regarding society and literature in our day. Our readers will surely sympathize with the wistful, yet brave, answer he finds in the words of the late saintly and heroic Frenchwoman, Simone Weil.—ED.]

It was immensely refreshing to meet Thornton Wilder, who was *en route* to Brussels for the *première* in the Théatre des Nations of his new play, and it was equally a breath of fresh air to talk to the distinguished novelist, Ruth Stephan. Both these American writers are dynamic and buoyant. Wilder lives and moves among human beings, and has only pity for such effusions as Samuel Beckett perpetrates. He said he would simply walk out of plays like *Waiting for Godot* or *Fin de Partie,* worlds of utter hopelessness. Ruth Stephan, author of the prize-winning novel, *The Flight,* a life of Queen Christina of Sweden, is a writer of historical fiction. Both writers have taken historical subjects; and while their methods are vastly different both have one thing in common: they write an *inward* story, even though all highly dramatic outward events are set forth with absolute accuracy.

This writing is a far cry from Camus's *The Fall*, which brings to a head the "falling sickness" from which so much contemporary writing suffers. So much of this writing is desk-chair writing, conceived with the apparatus of thought and delivered with high technique. It is cold and unsympathetic, which brings to mind Victor Hugo's advice to writers:—

> One must fill oneself with human science. Above all, and in spite of all, be a man. Do not fear to charge yourself with humanity. Ballast your mind with reality and then throw yourself into the sea. The sea is inspiration.

That is what is wrong with dehumanized writing. It lacks inspiration because it is so utterly self-centred. A writer who wishes merely to express himself is on the wrong track: his aim should be to express beyond himself. This method approaches the mystic or the *Aryan* path.

"Modern" man today takes life sitting down, and a culture of sitting supersedes a culture of the hand and the head. The trouble in all this is social, and the answer will be social. These vast extensions of communications, power and organization make no adjustment to the human community. They have ignored the little places. They have forgotten the small groups, the old familiar faces, in which people live as persons and come to know each other well. The intimate and organic function of the village or the family or the friendly neighbourhood is supplanted increasingly by massive organizations in which men live as fragments and serve as anonymous functionaries in a great machine. The average man has seen many people today, yet how many does he know?

> We meet, we pass,
> We pause and turn again;
> A moment stay,
> Then blindly journey on.
>
> Something we know of many,
> Much of none;
> The secret self
> In them, in us, unwon.

To be able to plumb the secret self is no simple matter, no *recipe* to be had for the asking. And a superficial acquaintance with a thousand people is as evanescent as clouds, as fleeting as ripples on the lake.

With how many people does a man have a continuing and many-sided relationship? How many are the whole beings in his experience, and he in turn

in theirs? The answer is: few or none. Still, the moral responsibility and artistic integrity of human beings have their only sources in that kind of relationship. Art is the fullness of living.

Thus the answer to the modern problem of the writer is social. Until the written can be reoriented towards the human community, life will be enjoyed only by proxy. Unless our interests are directed less towards the masses and are focused more in little groups, in community living and the like, among people who know each other well, the future of the arts will become clouded, if they are not altogether fossilized.

In a technological civilization there are few who still work by hand and in their own time, while the vast majority must work as the machine decides. In the past there was an art for the *élite* and a popular art, but they were both produced in the same kind of way. It is not surprising at all that the gap between highbrow and popular art becomes increasingly wider. Modern art is often criticized for being private and introspective, but such characteristics are bound to appear when the way in which the artist works is, in comparison with the way in which most of his neighbours work, most peculiar.

But it is not the modern artist alone who is affected by a technological civilization. How are industrial workers and civil servants affected? It is well-nigh impossible to work on a production line without depersonalizing oneself. If tractors and refrigerators can only be produced in this way, then what can be done? After how much time does depersonalization set in? Is there something of the machine that is incompatible with refrigerators and the like? Are the efforts of their producers nullified by the way in which movies and newspapers are produced? Or, for the matter of that, the way an organization is run? Posters, whether they preach brotherhood or advertise a toothpaste, are all putting the effect on the same level. When this sort of levelling happens, what can be done? Simone Weil has an answer:—

> To make an inventory or criticism of our civilisation—what does that mean? To try to expose in precise terms the trap which has made man the slave of his own inventions. How has unconsciousness infiltrated itself into methodical thought and action? To escape by a return to the primitive state is a lazy solution. We have to rediscover the original pact between the spirit and the world in this very civilisation of which we form a part. But it is a task which is beyond our power on account of the shortness of life and the impossibility of collaboration and succession. That is no reason for not undertaking it. The situation of all of us is comparable to that of Socrates when he was awaiting death in his prison and began to learn to play the lyre. At any rate we shall have lived.

BALDOON DHINGRA

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF WORLD CULTURE

[The thoughtful and timely article which we publish here is based in general upon the paper read at the Indian Institute of World Culture, Basavangudi, Bangalore, on World Peace Day (August 6th, 1956) by **Major-General S L. Bhatia, M.D. (Cantab.), F.R.C.P. (Lond.), F.R.S.E., I.M.S. (Retd.).** At our request he has revised it in the light of recent developments for publication in this issue.—ED.]

SCIENCE AND WORLD PEACE

The Second World War is less than twelve years behind us, but every now and again the world grows restless and peace is ever being threatened, now in Egypt, now in Indonesia, now in Jordan, while fear of the demonstrated devastation wrought by atomic weapons overshadows in many minds the potential beneficence of radioactivity applied to constructive ends. Happily India's influence, through her Prime Minister, has been consistently exerted on the side of peace, but we are all still in search of a suitable remedy for the existing unhappy state of affairs and some progress has been made in this direction. The urge for peace is strongest when men are at war, as during the two World Wars. But when hostilities cease, the urge becomes gradually less pronounced with the passage of time.

Let us consider briefly, at the outset, the history of the movements for maintaining World Peace in recent years.

The League of Nations arose out of the agony of World War I (1914-18). At the very outbreak of the war, Sir Edward Grey voiced the belief, that the only way out was the formation of a League of Nations. Mr. Asquith as the Prime Minister repeated this again and again. It was taken up by the Americans and the neutrals. President Wilson became the mouthpiece of this movement, so much so that a League was put in the forefront of the Allies' war aims.

The League, which was established in 1919, was an attempt to build on the tendencies which prevailed, to organize peace and to give formal expression to the interdependence of modern nations. Some steps had been taken before the First World War to have some machinery for the peaceful settlement of disputes, such as the Concert of Europe, the Hague Conferences and the Permanent Court of Arbitration, etc.

In essence, the League of Nations was an Association of States that had signed a Treaty, the Covenant pledging them to settle disputes peacefully and co-operate in matters of international concern.

I need not go into its history any further. Suffice it to say, that it tried to do useful work during the time it lasted. About twenty years after the League was formed, another World War broke out, in 1939; a war of a greater magnitude than the first, from the consequences of which we have not yet fully recovered.

One of the bodies set up by the League of Nations was its Health Section, which, I am glad to say, was more successful in its achievements than the League itself, and is justifiably regarded as the precursor of the World Health Organization, which exists today as an organ of the United Nations.

The United Nations came into being during the Second World War. On the 14th of August 1941 President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill issued a joint statement known as the Atlantic Charter, which envisaged a

peace affording to all peoples security from aggression, freedom to choose their own government, access to the trade and raw materials of the world, freedom of the seas, improved labour standards, economic advancement and social security and freedom from fear and want. This was followed by the Declaration by the United Nations on the 1st of January 1942, the Moscow Declaration on the 30th of October 1943, the Dumbarton Oaks proposals (Washington, D.C.) in the summer and fall of 1944, the Crimea Conference held at Yalta in February 1945, and the San Francisco Conference, which was held from the 25th of April to the 26th of June 1945. It was at this Conference that the Charter was unanimously approved and signed by all the participating governments. It was also there that a preparatory commission was established, which drew up detailed plans for the functioning of the principal organs of the United Nations. Subsequently, the General Assembly met for the first time in London on the 10th of January 1946, so that it is now about eleven and a half years that this organization has been functioning.

The United Nations Organization has four purposes:—

1. To maintain international peace and security.
2. To develop friendly relations among nations, based on respect for the equal rights and self-determination of peoples.
3. To co-operate in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character and in promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedom for all.
4. To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in attaining these common ends.

The Charter of the United Nations was framed because the people of the United Nations were determined:—

1. To save succeeding nations from the scourge of war.
2. To reaffirm faith in basic human rights and in the equal rights of men and women of all nations.
3. To establish conditions under which justice and respect for treaty obligations could be maintained.
4. To promote better standards of living and for these ends to practise tolerance and live in peace with one another; to unite their strength to ensure that armed force is used only in the common interest; and to employ international machinery for promoting the economic and social advancement of all peoples.

The United Nations Organization has a number of Specialized Agencies. I shall refer only to two of them, namely: (*a*) The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), (*b*) The World Health Organization (WHO).

The aims of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization are two: (*a*) It is international and has to serve the ends and objects of the United Nations. (*b*) It must foster and promote all aspects of education, science and culture.

It is laid down in the Preamble to its Constitution that "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed." Ignorance of one another's ways and lives has been a common cause throughout the history of mankind of the suspicion and mistrust among the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken out in war. The wide diffusion of culture and the education of humanity for justice, liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty, which all nations must fulfil in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern.

A peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would be inadequate, since it could not secure the unanimous lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world. *Peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.* Thus the Unesco was created for the purpose of advancing,

through the educational and scientific and cultural relations of the peoples of the world, the objectives of international peace and of the common welfare of mankind, for which the United Nations Organization was established.

The Unesco has a wide programme of work, which includes reconstruction, communications, education, cultural interchange, human and social relations and natural science, and it has a good record of work to its credit.

"The attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health" is the purpose for which the World Health Organization was created as a part of the U.N.O. Some of the functions of the W.H.O. are:—

(a) To act as the co-ordinating authority on international health work.

(b) To stimulate and advance work to eradicate epidemic, endemic and other diseases.

(c) To promote the improvement of nutrition, housing, sanitation, recreation, economic or working conditions and other aspects of environmental hygiene.

(d) To promote maternal and child health and welfare.

(e) To promote research in the field of health.

By promoting all measures for the improvement of health, the W.H.O., as well as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (U.N.I.C.E.F.), is making a great contribution to World Peace. There is world-wide co-operation in this field; more so here than in any other activity of the U.N.O. This is very gratifying.

To abolish war altogether is not impossible. This is all the more important, as war today is a greater menace than it was in the past. It is likely to be a still greater menace in the future. According to Bertrand Russell, there are three sorts of obstacles to its abolition, namely: political, economic and psychological. These obstacles cannot be removed quickly. There is need for a single supreme world government, which will impose its will on any national state or combination of states. Economic conditions include economic and social justice among nations as among individuals. To get over certain psychological obstacles and remove all racial hatred and prejudices it is necessary to introduce a fresh humanistic spirit in education. Special stress is needed on the training of character. Bias and credulity are characteristics which are very useful to the war-monger. It will be necessary in their place to develop a spirit of impartiality and a measure of scepticism. A scientific habit of mind should be cultivated and a judicial power of weighing evidence. If peace is to be preserved, mankind must learn not to be divided into hostile camps by opposing irrational fanaticisms. History has become the handmaid of patriotism, patriotism often of the most aggressive type. To correct this, the sense of justice must be cultivated from the nursery onwards.

We must all make a determined attempt to maintain permanent peace in the world.

Organized and cumulative knowledge, based on observation and experiment, which we call "Science," is the one great feature of modern times. Although still in its infancy, it has revolutionized man's way of life and his attitude to the universe. Moreover the rate of change is increasing and the next fifty years will probably see changes far outstripping even what has been done during the last 200 years. The main effect of the application of science has been to shrink the globe to a fraction of its former girth by the invention of the radio, the telegraph, the telephone, the railway, the steamship, the aeroplane and cheap printing. Another effect is that mankind is culturally and economically becoming one interdependent society, in which injuries done to one member have repercussions which are felt more or less severely by all the rest. The material basis of our civilization has been growing and altering more quickly than the

habits or beliefs of long standing, so that the latter have not adapted themselves properly to the changing conditions. The growth of science has also led to great industrial development. Further, I cannot emphasize too strongly that scientific research is primarily meant to discover the truth by objective methods.

All scientific knowledge should be employed for the good and welfare of humanity and not for its destruction. The use of atomic and hydrogen bombs, poison gas and disease germs in warfare is ethically wrong and should be forbidden. India is raising her voice in this matter with promising results.

On August 5th, 1956, it was announced in the press by Dr. H. J. Bhabha, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, that India had started producing atomic energy and that the first atomic reactor, which was also the first in Asia, had gone into operation on the afternoon of the 4th of August 1956 at Trombay. This is indeed a matter on which Dr. Bhabha and his enthusiastic band of workers deserve our hearty congratulations. The atomic energy produced here will ultimately be used for making radioactive isotopes for research in agriculture, industry and medicine. It will be used for peaceful purposes and not for war, and thus India, I am glad to say, has set a very fine example to the rest of the world in this respect.

Scientists are interested primarily, as I have just said, in the discovery of truth. The responsibility for applying scientific discoveries for war purposes does not rest with the scientists alone. It was scientists, not the non-scientific men, who protested against the use of the atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is the scientists who, by virtue of their technical knowledge, know the harmful effects of their discoveries. *I feel that they should not rest content merely with the discovery of truth. They can and should play an important part in deciding how their discoveries should be incorporated in the social life of the people.* In the final analysis, it is the moral forces which will control the harmful application of these discoveries.

There are today hopeful signs. The agitation against the testing of atomic and hydrogen bombs has been growing in intensity and extent. And the report came in the first part of last April from West Germany that fifteen leading atomic scientists, among them the Nobel Laureate Werner Carl Heisenberg, had signed a declaration issued by the Max Planck Institute, of which they were members, to the effect that a small country like theirs could at present best protect itself and serve world peace by renouncing the possession of all kinds of atomic weapons. They were quoted as stating that, while they were not politicians they felt responsible for the possible consequences of their scientific work and that they were not prepared to take part in any way in the production, testing or operation of atomic weapons. Some East German scientists were shortly afterward reported to have endorsed their stand. These reports are very encouraging and one must hope that the example set will spread.

According to H. G. Wells, there are three episodes in human history which are the most important in the development of the human race and its civilization, namely:—

1. The awakening of free thought in mankind by the Ionian Greeks.
2. The awakening of the free conscience of mankind by the Hebrew prophets.
3. The awakening of the sense of solidarity in mankind by the political and social changes of recent times.

To these he adds a fourth as a coefficient, as an essential condition for future progress, namely, the need for the self-discipline of each and every individual and nation in the feeling of social obligation and for good manners,

so that the above three forces may operate for the greatest good of the greatest number. I believe that, in bringing about this self-discipline of individuals and nations, modern medicine has played a great part as a tremendous social force by minimizing the enormous havoc wrought by disease and by improving the health and consequently the social and economic conditions of the people. This gives us faith in our profession and should make us look to the future with courage and confidence.

As a medical man may I say that Medicine is a wholesome blend of Science and the Humanities and in that respect differs from pure science? We in the medical profession have been guided in our conduct and practice by certain universal ethical principles, which have been handed down to us from the past. Those ethical principles should also guide all scientists. The Oath of Hippocrates has been known to all medical men and women all the world over for centuries. The author of this Oath, Hippocrates, was a Greek physician who was born in the little island of Cos off the Coast of Asia Minor in 460 B.C. He died probably in 355 B.C. His Oath contains a noble code of ethics, in which the student is shown the dignity and responsibility of his calling; and there are urged upon him the duties of respect for his teacher and his school, of seeking above all the benefit of his patient and of taking no mean advantage of his position as medical adviser.

Speaking at the Indian Institute of World Culture, Bangalore, on World Peace Day last year, I ventured to suggest a modification of the Hippocratic Oath for scientists, trusting that it would guide them to divert their efforts to such pursuits as are beneficial to the human race. For what is the use of science, if it destroys mankind?

I suggest for the scientist the following Oath:—

> I swear by all that is Holy and Sacred, that according to my ability and judgment, I will keep this Oath and this stipulation; to reckon him who taught me this science equally dear to me as my parents, to share my substance with him and relieve his necessities if required; to look upon his offspring as equal to my own brothers and to teach them this Science if they shall wish to learn it, and that by precept, lecture and every mode of instruction I will impart a knowledge of this science to my own sons and those of my teachers and to disciples bound by a stipulation and an Oath to obedience to this Law of Science, but to none other. I will follow that system of regimen, which according to my ability and judgment I consider to be for the benefit of humanity and abstain from whatever is injurious and harmful. I will always seek the truth and will try to grow in knowledge. I will devote myself to my science even at the risk of my life. With purity and with holiness I will pass my life and practise my scientific knowledge in a manner that will be for the good of all mankind, believing that where there is a love of man there is also love of this knowledge. While I continue to keep this Oath unviolated, may it be granted to me to enjoy life and learn and practise this Science for all time. But should I trespass and violate this Oath, may the reverse be my lot.

And now may I repeat the statement made in July 1955 jointly by Albert Einstein, Percy W. Bridgman, Leopold Infeld, Hermann J. Muller, Cecil F. Powell, Joseph Rotblat, Bertrand Russell, Hideki Yukawa and Jean Frédéric Joliot-Curie, all world-renowned scientists and humanists, who had clearly stated the problem facing humanity today?

> Here then is the problem which we present to you, stark and dreadful and inescapable: shall we put an end to the human race or shall mankind renounce war? People will not face this alternative, because it is so difficult to abolish war.
>
> There lies before us, if we choose, continual progress in happiness, knowledge and wisdom. Shall we instead choose death because we cannot forget our quarrels? We appeal, as human beings, to human beings; remember your humanity, and forget the rest. If you can do so, the way lies open to a new paradise; if you cannot, there lies before you the risk of universal death.

It is high time that something was done about this matter. The real answer is education, especially university education. The unversity is the chief

agency in mobilizing the cultural resources of the nation for the paramount purpose of national expansion and progress as well as the promotion of World Peace. In university education, it is essential to lay stress on internationalism. The new note to be struck is that of international amity and concord. The marvellous creation of Rabindranath Tagore's brain, Visvabharati at Shanti Niketan, at once Indian and universal as its name shows, has placed India in the forefront in this movement of international universities.

The apostles of amity and concord are the youth of today, in whose hands the future of this world rests. They are the custodians of World Peace. If only they knew how great are their potential power and responsibility in this sphere! The greatest asset of youth is its optimism, its perennial spring of joy and spirit of adventure. It is the youth, with their fresh outlook on the affairs of the world, who can find a satisfactory solution, where the former custodians of the world have so far failed. I, therefore, make a special appeal to the youth in my country that they should be inspired by a wide outlook, so that they may cherish profound love not only for their own Motherland but for all mankind and ignore all differences of race, language, creed or colour.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize that to bring about World Peace our outlook must be based on some form of humanism. A new tradition of humanism has to be created, a new interpretation of history, which will heal all schisms and discords and dispose us to national harmony and international amity. It must be scientific humanism, as the application of science provides most of the material basis for human culture; and also the practice of science needs to be integrated with the humanities. *The outlook must not be merely materialistic, but must embrace the spiritual as well as material aspects of existence.* Scientific humanism would help us to make an evolutionary approach to the affairs of mankind, not merely a static approach. This is essential, as it would be a link between the natural sciences and human history and would provide a satisfactory explanation for the various trends and activities with all their diversities, which we call progress. And above all, we should have faith in the teachings of the great masters of the past. We should remember the words of Buddha: "Victory breeds hatred, for the vanquished is stricken with suffering."

Therefore it is that one war leads to another, for the vanquished in one war, who is stricken with suffering, seeks to avenge it in the next war, and the process is repeated *ad infinitum*. The pain and misery caused are equally severe in the case of both the opposing parties.

We cannot be national without being international.

Let us dedicate ourselves to the cause of World Peace, with hearts full of universal love, believing firmly that

> Serene will be our days and bright,
> And happy will our nature be,
> When love is an unerring light,
> And joy its own security.

S. L. BHATIA

ENDS AND SAYINGS

"————————ends of verse
And sayings of philosophers."
HUDIBRAS

Save for the light it throws on human vanity and credulity and the fierceness of challenged orthodoxy, "False Prophets and Others," by A. S. Triton, in Parts I and II, 1957, of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* yields scant food for thought. Some self-styled "Prophets" seem to have been mad of drug addicts, with nothing elevating reported of their teachings or their practices. Others, who laid no claim to Prophethood, some learned men and alleged possessors of supernormal powers, critics of orthodoxy, seem not to merit being bracketed with madcaps. The great Sufi mystics with their universal teachings are happily spared inclusion in the survey, though al-Hallaj's proclaiming himself the Truth, which cost him his life, went beyond even claims to Prophethood.

Many have glimpsed Reality but have hidden the whole Truth behind their personalities. False prophets, however, like counterfeit coins, prove the existence of what they imitate. True Prophets are reformers, protestants against excrescences that hide their Predecessors' teachings, living links in the unending chain of witnesses to the Truth, which is enshrined in the deepest consciousness of every man but is approachable by each only in the measure of his purity of heart and unselfishness of purpose.

In a public speech on April 13th Prime Minister Nehru said, "All of us should try to influence the minds of the great people who have the destiny of the world in their hands, so that they may come together to find a way out of the danger threatening mankind." While it is undoubtedly true that, unless the right of peaceful co-existence is recognized, a holocaust will follow, it is necessary for us to go to the root of the matter and examine the issues which in our time are making co-existence impossible.

What those issues are is discussed by Mr. Wilfred Wellock in an article, "The Foundations of Peace," in *Sarvodaya* of May 1957. During the last half-century, with the changing world situation, different theories about the causes of war have been evolved. First it was thought that wars would continue as long as capitalist nations sought to capture world markets to expand their profits. Then imperialism and colonialism were blamed as promoting wars. In the agitation for the liquidation of colonialism, Communism has played a considerable part, and this has assisted the spread of Communism. Today the rivalry and the fear which divide the two power blocs are a constant menace to the world.

As Mr. Wellock points out, the mere acceptance of the principle of co-existence is not enough. The real cause of modern wars, according to him, lies in the growth of Western materialism and the high living standards, in the U.S.A. especially, involving as they do huge demands upon the earth's resources. The contemplated exploitation of the immense deposits of vital raw materials in Africa, for instance, with the aid of American money, will make American power and influence grow in that vast continent; but, *pari passu*, fear in Communist countries will also grow, and Communist propaganda will pour into Africa through many channels. Mr. Wellock concludes:—

> These are the realities of our time. They indicate war, not peace, unless there is a dis-

position to go to the roots of the whole problem of peace or war. Is co-existence part of the roots? Not really. It is largely Western materialism, the devouring propensities of an expanding economy, higher and ever-ascending level of consumption of goods and services. This materialistic way of life is a sin against the Truth that life does not consist in the abundance of a man's income or possessions, but in a pure heart and a contrite spirit, in living creatively, with the whole heart and mind, for the good of humanity.

A warning against the publishing of current creative literature by the State was sounded at the Seminar of more than fifty writers in nine Indian languages held in Allahabad under the auspices of the Parimal, a local organization of Hindi writers. The Seminar's Commission on "The Writer and State Patronage" held that the Akademies should be completely autonomous. They viewed State publishing as tending towards monopoly, leading to authoritarianism, and towards political or partisan bias. They held that it prevented the growth of new or protestant trends.

State patronage, direct or indirect, in a democracy like India holds but a negative threat to creative freedom. No monopoly is contemplated here like that granted to the Stationers' Company in seventeenth-century England; no pre-publication censorship and licensing of books by Order of Parliament against which Milton thundered. But will not the best-intentioned State-sponsored body, by making it advantageous to writers to produce what it is likely to approve, exert willy-nilly an indirect pressure? Eternal vigilance is proverbially the price of liberty; and conformity, or what Milton called "a grosse conforming stupidity," is an infectious malady to which our age is highly susceptible.

The late Mr. Hermon Ould put well the need for freedom. Introducing *Freedom of Expression: A Symposium*, based on the Conference called by the London P.E.N. Centre in 1944 to celebrate the Tercentenary of Milton's *Areopagitica*, he wrote:—

> . . . the human mind, if it is to develop to the full measure of its potentialities, must be free: free to grow, free to express itself, free to blunder, to make mistakes, and try again.

On every occasion and on every subject people quote Gandhiji and opine about what he would say or do. In a thoughtful contribution in *Gandhi Marg* (Second Number, for April 1957) Miraben remarks:—

> The talk of the Gandhian outlook, and the Gandhian method, and by so doing are developing something which must be called Gandhism. As we know, Bapu always insisted that there was no such thing, that he was a seeker after truth, that he had no disciples—and wanted none. Bapu himself always said he could not tell till a problem was before him how he would deal with it. The light came to him in the moments of darkness, and his decisions at such times often took people's breath away. How then can we attempt to decide what he would have done in this world of 1957, which in ten years has gone through the evolution of centuries.
>
> Sometimes that which looks like truth is a subtle deception, and sometimes that which looks like non-violence is a mockery.
>
> Bearing this in mind, and opening our hearts to the great spirit which is Bapu, let us be *ourselves*, and say what *we* feel, without calling it Gandhian. In consciously endeavouring to be Gandhians there is great danger of our becoming unnatural.

This important psychological truth deserves to be reiterated. To evaluate the ideas of Gandhiji we need a knowledge of principles underlying those ideas. Many followers desire to act on their assumptions of what the Father of the Nation would have done. Among such are wearers of the cloak of hypocrisy, and others thoughtlessly do harm, fancying they are doing good.

The improving status of women in this country is a glorious chapter in the history of recent times. Many were the factors which have combined to free women from the shackles of outworn traditions, prejudice and ignorance, not the least of them being the yeoman

services of voluntary organizations of women themselves. These organizations have worked on a broad basis, pioneering in many directions and promoting a multiplicity of welfare schemes. Many social handicaps and disabilities that once loomed large on the women's horizon have seemed virtually eliminated, the chief among them being *purdah* and child marriages. In the later twenties of the present century, it may be remembered, the Age of Consent Committee tackled the problem of early marriages and succeeded in 1929 in putting the Child Marriage Restraint Act on the Statute Book. It, therefore, comes rather as a shock that, twenty-eight years after child marriages were declared illegal, one should read the following report (*The Statesman*, May 5th, 1957):—

> Nearly 30,000 Hindu marriages were solemnized in one day alone in Jodhpur division. It was the day of Akha Teej (starting of sowing operations in Marwar) which is considered to be the most auspicious time for marriage in this part of India. Cases of marriages of children below 10 years were reported from many parts. In some villages infants had to be carried by their mothers during the ceremony.

Although it may be argued that the number of such child marriages forms a small proportion considering the total population of the country, the fact that they could be performed at all without any apparent hindrance from the authorities shows that the law is either not well enough known in certain parts of the country or not taken seriously enough. It is a pity that it is not often realized that such laxities not only frustrate the purpose for which any social legislation was passed but also encourage defiance of laws in general. It is, therefore, obvious that more intensive educative propaganda by organizations must be undertaken if the laws of the land are not to be flouted with impunity. The difficulty in enforcing this legislation was envisaged even during the time of the debate on the Bill thirty years ago, when it was emphasized that vigilance associations must be formed to maintain a strict watch and to report cases of violation of the Act to the authorities. It was further urged that the minimum age of marriage should be raised higher than fifteen, as stipulated in the Bill, and that penalties for breaches of the law should be made more severe.

Shri S. K. Dey, Union Minister for Community Development, has raised a controversy over dietetics by his suggestion of a switch-over to non-vegetarianism as a cure for the food shortage in the country. The suggestion implies that there is enough of non-vegetarian food to go round, if Indians switch over to it; which on the face of it is very thoughtless. Apart from the ethical and spiritual objections to non-vegetarianism, the Minister's cure is Utopian, for, according to reliable estimates, while a single acre is sufficient for the yearly sustenance of two adults on a vegetarian diet, the amount of land required after switching over to non-vegetarianism would be three acres and a half. It is strange how the Minister has completely ignored the fact that animals and birds providing non-vegetarian diet have also to get their food from the grass, foodgrains and vegetables grown on land. In this connection it is worth while to read the following from a recent number of the *War Resister of England*:—

> Were man to become vegetarian, it would solve one of the most pressing problems of our time. It takes seven to ten times more land to feed a man on meat and dairy products than it does on vegetables, cereals and fruit. It is difficult to overrate the contribution of this fact to peace. Since economic pressure is one of the main causes of war, think how much easier should be the task of diplomats, who are constantly trying against intense competition, to secure new markets for countries which have to export manufactured goods so as to be able to import food for their population.

Does the Minister realize that India is the only country where almost complete vegetarianism has been practised for centuries by about 10 to 15

per cent of the population and that, even if the rest eat meat, they do so sparingly? Should this great moral asset be thrown away just to satisfy a passing whim of our Minister?

The veteran publicist and Nobel Laureate, Sir Norman Angell, an honoured early contributor to our pages, sounds a warning to liberals in the free nations in his "Notes on the Way" in *Time and Tide* (March 23rd, 1957). He thinks they have too long taken it for granted that the terms for liberal principles still convey to the many their long-accepted connotations. The Communists, holders of a wide-spreading anti-liberal creed, have taken as their slogans the liberal watch-words—democracy, freedom, self-determination—undisturbed by the contradiction of these in their own practice—to stir emotionally the masses ignorant of the prerequisites to their success.

For freedom to survive, he rightly holds, some organs of authority must be maintained, as rules are indispensable to freedom of the road. But he has seen, even in free England, the putting of group interests above the general welfare, often, he thinks, due to ignorance of the bearing of the action taken on the country's interests.

> The millions turned out by our schools have been taught many strange things. But for the most part they have been taught nothing of the interdependence of the tasks which keep our society going.

The "salvage of liberalism" is important for "the welfare and freedom of mankind as a whole."

That all is not well with modern life is indicated by the number of suicides. Dr. Howard A. Rusk, M.D., writing in *The New York Times* of May 19th, states that in 1955, for example, there were 16,200 recorded suicides in the United States alone, as compared to 7,840 homicides. The actual number is much higher, but, because of the moral or religious stigma attached to self-murder, in many cases it fails to be recorded as such.

Statistical studies on suicide give answers to the questions of who, where, when and how. But the most important question of all—*why* do people commit suicide?—still remains to be solved. Dr. Rusk states that severe economic and social crises produce more suicides, particularly among the prosperous. Also it has been found that the frequency of suicide increases in direct ratio to the size of a city. Does this not suggest that the artificiality and uncertainty of modern city life, and the terrible mental strain it involves, have something to do with the rising suicide rate? But city life is the proudest flower of "civilization"! We need to examine the foundations on which modern civilization is based to find the *why* of suicide.

The primary cause of suicide is not insanity but a wrong aim in life, the overvaluation of physical comfort, the mistaken emphasis on the physical and the material. Materialistic science must share with materialistic theology the responsibility for the helpless attitude of man, his feeling of being overwhelmed by life, and of being powerless to change it for himself. People refuse to face life or to face their own natures, because, being ignorant, they are afraid to do so. And, if something shocks them from their heedless living, they break under the impact. Not social and welfare agencies, but philosophy that provides a rational explanation of things, is the need of the despairing people who contemplate suicide.

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